



The Guardian INTERNATIONAL

NEWSPAPER OF THE YEAR

Wednesday November 13 1996

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Sale of the century that never was

The Gandhi papers

G2 with Europe's 11 weeklies

Return of Cam Mack and Martin Guerre

The comeback wizard

G2 with Europe's 11 weeklies

Society

Life on the edge — in Burkina Faso

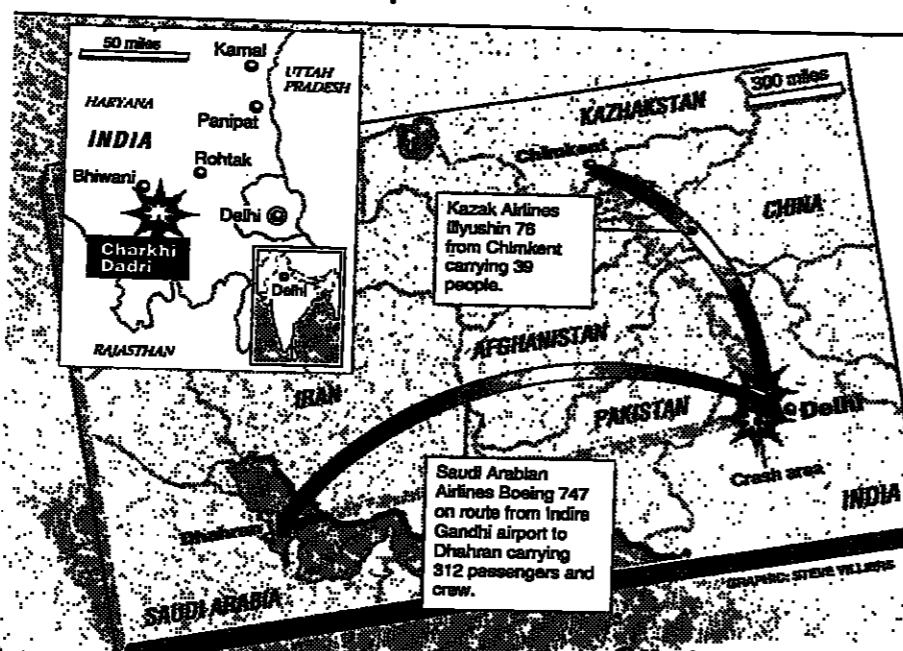
G2 pages 10/11

Communication problems may have led to tragedy

350 die as jets collide

World's worst mid-air crash

Suzanne Goldenberg in New Delhi



Major air disasters

- March 27, 1977: Two Boeing 747s operated by Pan Am and KLM collided in flight over the North Atlantic, killing 270 people.
- August 12, 1985: Japan Air Lines Boeing 747 crashes into the Indian Ocean, killing 329 people.
- March 27, 1977: Two Boeing 747s operated by Pan Am and KLM collided in flight over the North Atlantic, killing 270 people.
- June 25, 1985: An Indian Boeing 747 crashes off the coast of India, killing 282 people.
- August 19, 1985: Emergency landing of Saudi Arabian Airlines Boeing 747 at Riyadh airport, 302 killed.
- November 21, 1985: Two Air France Boeing 747 crashes at L'Aquila, Italy, killing 270 people.
- September 1, 1985: Korean Air Lines Boeing 747 crashes in the Sea of Japan, killing 268 people.
- April 26, 1984: China Airlines Boeing 747 crashes in Nagasaki, Japan, killing 282 people.

INDIA'S government launched a full-scale judicial inquiry last night after a Saudi Arabian jet and a Kazakh airliner were destroyed in a mid-air collision, 50 miles south-west of New Delhi, killing all 351 passengers and crew aboard the two planes.

It was the worst mid-air crash in aviation history, and the third worst air disaster. As Saudi crash experts made their way to India, investigators were focusing on possible communication problems between the Kazakh pilot and Delhi air traffic control, or equipment failure.

The collision between the Saudi Boeing-747, carrying 312 people, and the Kazakh Ilushin-76 charter flight with 39 aboard, occurred over flat farmlands in the northern state of Haryana. Although night had fallen, the skies were clear. One Boeing was reportedly aboard the jumbo.

The Saudi airliner had left New Delhi's Indira Gandhi International airport bound for Dhahran and Jeddah only seven minutes earlier, when it crashed into the other plane arriving from Chhikent in Kazakhstan.

Indian aviation experts said that pilots from the former Soviet Union have always had problems in understanding instructions given in English. In recent years, pilots from the former Soviet republics have been flying to New Delhi in greater numbers — new airlines using old aircraft — as they compete for the lower end of the market.

Air traffic controllers said it was very rare for a Boeing, which is equipped with the latest navigational aids, to

make a mistake on take-off. H. S. Khola, the director of civil aviation, said air controllers had ordered the Saudi plane to climb to 14,000ft, and the Kazakh aircraft to descend to 15,000ft, when disaster struck. "At 18.33 the [Saudi] aircraft was airborne and about 18.40 the contact was lost, about seven minutes after take-off," he said.

The secretary-general of the Indian air traffic controllers' guild said the Kazakh aircraft could have been flying at a height lower than 15,000ft. "Russian aircraft normally have cockpit equipment marked in the metric system, and there could be a possibility of wrong data setting and

thus wrong height level being maintained," he said.

The crash, which left scattered flaming debris for six miles, was seen by several people, including the pilots of a United States air force plane carrying supplies to the US embassy in New Delhi.

"We noticed out of our right-hand a large cloud lit-up with an orange glow," one pilot said. The glow increased in intensity, and then they "saw two fireballs."

A building contractor, Rao Singh, said: "I saw a fireball and big black smoke, about three or four kilometres [two miles] from my house, falling into the fields. The sky was absolutely red."

The real rescue work will get under way after daybreak today, but the Indian air force has sent helicopters to the area. Police have cordoned off the crash site and posted guards over the belongings of the dead, which were strewn among the wreckage.

About 270 bodies, many charred and still burning, have been recovered. The Press Trust of India reported that a few people had survived the impact but died before reaching hospital.

In New Delhi, relatives of passengers descended on the airport, seeking information, forcing the delay of flights. Many of the passengers on



Chief victims relatives in Delhi

Whips 'tried to subvert Hamilton investigation'

David Hencke Westminster Correspondent

THE Government was accused last night of an organised attempt to subvert the first investigation into the cash-for-questions scandal which examined former minister Neil Hamilton's undeclared stay at the Ritz Hotel, Paris, and cash payments from Mohamed Al Fayed, owner of Harrods.

But MPs investigating the affair yesterday were prevented from pursuing the allegation and went into secret session when a new document implicating a second government whip in the scandal was produced.

The document emerged during a two-hour cross-examination of David Willetts, the Paymaster General and former assistant whip, who wrote a memo suggesting Sir Geoffrey Johnson Smith, the Tory grandee chairing the original investigation, could smother its findings.

Dale Campbell-Savours, Labour MP for Workington, caused a furore last night by producing a letter from Andrew Mitchell, a government whip who sat on the first inquiry, to Richard Ryder, the Chief Whip.

Mr Campbell-Savours told Mr Willetts: "I put it to you that there was a deliberate, very effective effort made by the whips' office — and you were in the whips' office and Andrew Mitchell was in the whips' office — to try to influence this inquiry and to use the relationship between a member of that committee who was a whip and a clerk of the House of Commons to feed information to the Chief Whip and ultimately the Prime Minister."

Mr Willetts said: "I'm not prepared to speculate about a note which has just been put in front of me. I do not know



HE WAS IN THE TENT PASSING OUT — 180° WIDE.

its provenance. I don't even know whether Andrew Mitchell wrote it or not."

Tony Newton, chairman of the Standards and Privileges Committee which is investigating the scandal, stopped further discussion of the new evidence saying it was not reasonable to question Mr Willetts on it.

He told Mr Campbell-Savours: "I'm simply suggesting, prompted by the obvious feeling of some members of the committee, that it would be inappropriate to continue to ask David Willetts questions about it."

Tory MPs, led by Iain Duncan Smith, Conservative MP for Chingford, protested after Mr Campbell-Savours produced the letter which he said was part of an "organised pattern" by the Government's whips' office — which imposes party discipline and gathers information — to keep John Major informed about the inquiry.

Mr Newton, Leader of the House, nearly closed the session but eventually won agreement for MPs to discuss turn to page 2, column 8

Letters, page 8

Priest led Internet paedophile ring

Six years jail for sex abuse of boys

Madeline Bunting Religious Affairs Editor

ROMAN Catholic priest who used the Internet to sell paedophiles around the world how he had abused boys was yesterday jailed for six years.

Father Adrian McLeish used his computer skills to build the biggest collection of child pornography discovered. The material, on four computers and including 9,000 images, would have filled the 24 volume Encyclopedia Britannica 11 times over. Detectives told Newcastle upon Tyne crown court that it included the worst material seized in this country.

Sentencing McLeish, Mr Justice Moses said: "You sexually abused four young boys, some of whom you groomed

abroad describing how he had assaulted four boys and identifying them by name. The case is the first in this country with a proven link between pornographic correspondence on the Internet and abuse of children.

The boys whom McLeish assaulted, now aged 18, 14, 10 and nine, went to the police after the priest's arrest. McLeish had made contact with the boys through their families' connection with the church and had groomed them for his sexual activities.

Beatrice Bolton, prosecuting, said the families "all had a liking and trust of McLeish and were happy to let their children stay the night with him — sure the youngsters were safe in his hands."

Outside the court, solicitor Charles McCain, representing three of the families, said: "The children and their families have suffered unimaginable harm in the hands of Father McLeish."

Legal aid has been granted to pursue a claim for damages and Mr McCain said he hoped the church would deal with the civil claims "quickly and sympathetically to enable the



McLeish entering court: Huge collection of pornography

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G2

Crossword 16; Weather 16; Radio and TV 16

For a £55 stake, Terry O'Callaghan won £250,000 on an accumulator bet on football matches.

O'Callaghan is refusing to pay out.

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The Willetts inquiry

Letter points to 'inquiry interference'

Labour MP says whips organised campaign to sway committee

Alan Travis and Owen Bowcott

FRESH evidence of an organised campaign by government whips to influence the Commons committee looking at the Guardian's original allegations against Neil Hamilton, the former Tory Minister, was disclosed by a Labour MP last night.

Dale Campbell-Savours, MP for Workington, revealed the new evidence — contained in a letter to the then Government Chief Whip, Richard Ryder — to the Standards and Privileges Committee investigating whether improper pressure had been used in 1994.

Mr Campbell-Savours repeatedly challenged David Willetts, Paymaster General, to comment on the activities of fellow government whips at the time disclosed by the correspondence.

"My argument is that the whips organised to ensure that matters being dealt with in the committee were dealt with in a particular way and the whips were not acting objectively in the handling of the Hamilton affair," said Mr Campbell-Savours.

"I am arguing that Mr Willetts in my view was one of these whips and he may have been aware of what was in this correspondence and I want to question him about it."

Mr Campbell-Savours said the letter to Richard Ryder was from Andrew Mitchell, MP for Gedling, a colleague of Mr Willetts in the whips' office at the time.

It was headed: "Chief Whip" and referred to an independent article of October 24 1994 about Mr Hamilton's failure to register payments from a PR company in the MPs' register of interests.

Mr Mitchell's letter said: "I spoke to the Registrar of Members' Interests. In confi-

dence [underlined] he told me the following:

a. He does not know what view the Committee [on MPs' Interests] would take. He does not think that they would like it. There is no relevant past decision (case law) for them to refer back to.

b. However, the Registrar was clear that he was entitled not to register it, especially if there was no related parliamentary activity. In normal times, he thinks the committee would have taken a relaxed view.

c. He summarised (having read the article in the Independent): 'I can understand his argument. It is not worthless.'

Mr Campbell-Savours said: "Then there is a comment of Andrew Mitchell's dated October 24 1994 to the Chief Whip saying: 'Not very helpful. I am afraid.'"

"Mr Mitchell was a government whip at this stage and was a member on the Members' Interests Committee — a quasi-judicial committee. Do you Mr Willetts believe it is the kind of letter a whip should be sending to the Chief Whip when he is a member of that committee?"

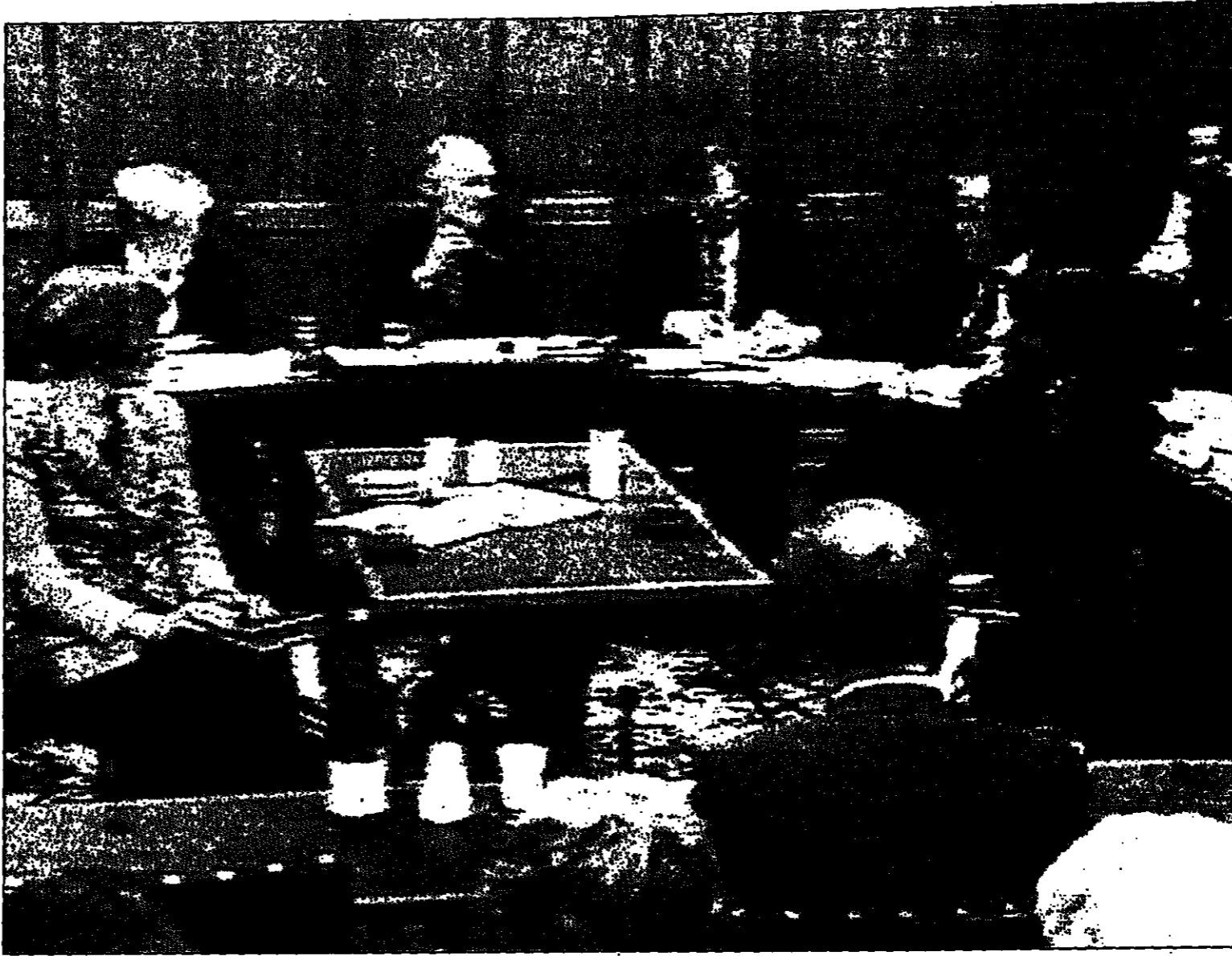
Mr Willetts said: "I am not prepared to speculate about a note that has just been put in front of me and other members of the committee have not seen it before either."

"I don't know its provenance or whether Andrew Mitchell wrote it or not."

He received backing from Tony Newton, the committee chairman, who said it would have been appropriate to give Mr Willetts notice of the letter.

Mr Campbell-Savours said he was trying to establish "to what extent did Mr Willetts interfere with the workings of the committee. I am taking another example of interference and asking him whether it was right or wrong."

Again Mr Willetts blocked, saying he had not interfered with the workings of the com-



David Willetts (with back to camera) faces the Commons committee at which he was attacked by Labour MP Dale Campbell-Savours

mittee and could not speculate on other notes which had or had not been written by other people.

"Do you think it is right," persisted Mr Campbell-Savours, "that a government whip who was a member of a quasi-judicial committee of the Commons should or could use that committee membership, and the relationship that goes with it with the clerk of that committee, to ring up and extract information about another MP without a complaint being made?"

Again Mr Newton intervened before Mr Willetts could say anything and told Mr Campbell-Savours that it was not reasonable for him to

ask the Paymaster General such questions as he had no way of knowing the answers.

Mr Campbell-Savours claimed that at the time of the allegations against Neil Hamilton in 1994, the chief whip was carrying out detailed inquiries into the affair and reporting to Michael Heseltine, the deputy prime minister. The Commons was at "fever pitch" over it, he said.

"The flow of information was from the clerk of the Members' Interests Committee, to Andrew Mitchell, to the whips' office, to the chief whip and to the Prime Minister," Mr Campbell-Savours told Mr Willetts "and this is the background to the writing

of your memorandum."

The memo referred to by Mr Campbell-Savours appeared to indicate that Sir Geoffrey Johnson-Smith, then chairman of the committee investigating MPs' behaviour, wanted advice from the Government on how to deal with complaints about Mr Hamilton. On Monday Mr Willetts denied such an interpretation.

At this point Mr Newton intervened by saying that it would be "inappropriate" to continue questioning Mr Willetts on the basis of Andrew Mitchell's note. There should be further discussions about it at another stage.

Mr Mitchell had led the discussion about Neil Hamilton on the Members' Interests Committee and most of the decisions that were taken.

"Within that committee there were whips who were trying directly and deliberately to interfere in the Hamilton inquiry," he added. Mr Willetts would have been well aware of what was going on.

"There's a pattern here of intense whip activity both on and off this committee," Mr Willetts denied there had been any concerted campaign. "If there's a whips' note saying it will rain and it rains, then that's proof," he told Mr Campbell-Savours.

Mr Willetts that the "embellishing" in his original memorandum might have been because he was ambitious or trying to attract attention to his new role as a whip.

"You may have a point there," Mr Willetts conceded. Later he described it as being "rather poorly drafted".

Quentin Davies, Tory MP for Stamford and Spalding, then resumed the line of questioning he had developed on Monday. Mr Willetts, he said, had been using "weasel words".

Hamilton scandal spreads

continued from page 1
the letter in secret at the end of the hearing. Later he was seen seeking an urgent meeting with Alastair Goodlad, the Chief Whip.

The letter to Mr Ryder appears to show that Mr Mitchell had used his privileged position to find out from the Registrar of Members' Interests whether Mr Hamilton had logged his consultancy with Strategy Network International, a public relations company which had strong links with South Africa.

The registrar is reported as saying that he does not think the committee would like this though "in normal times" it would take "a relaxed view" of the Hamilton case. Mr Mitchell comments to the Chief Whip: "Not very helpful. I am afraid."

Last night government whips admitted that the letter was genuine, leaving the committee with the problem of whether to call Mr Mitchell to give evidence.

The hearing came two years after the Guardian reported that Mr Hamilton and Tim Smith, another minister, had received cash from Mr Al Fayed for asking parliamentary questions.

The story led to the establishment of the inquiry under Lord Nolan to examine standards in public life, and a reluctant reform of parliamentary procedures.

"You were traducing Sir Geoffrey," Mr Davies said to Mr Willetts. "You were implying he was open to manipulation and influence. That was an appalling libel on Sir Geoffrey if you took what was written at face value."

Was it not more plausible that the note was an accurate reflection of the conversation and that Mr Willetts had been "prepared to pay the price of lying to this committee" in order to protect Sir Geoffrey?

"There's no truth in any suggestion that I have lied to this committee," Mr Willetts retorted.

In successive exchanges with Mr Davies, he denied he was protecting Sir Geoffrey.

Dale Campbell-Savours — awkward to the core



THE standard complaint that too many MPs are interested only in becoming ministers would never have applied to Dale Campbell-Savours (right), even if he had not been elected Labour MP for Workington at the start of Labour's long march through the Opposition lobbies in 1973.

From the start of his Commons career, he demonstrated that puritanical, inquiring independence which marks an MP down among the whips on both sides as unsuitable for office. Instead, he was destined to join the small but vital band known to colleagues as the Awkward Squad.

From low level RAF flights and the Falklands invasion of the early '80s, through spy rows and environmental battles, running fights over the committee on members' interests he was often in the fray, sometimes conspiratorially, always assiduously.

He even tracked down the window cleaner who stole his portable phone — by getting

BT to check all the numbers dialled. Any MP facing investigation by the new Standards and Privileges Committee must assume that the gangling Campbell-Savours will be the most tenacious inquisitor.

The child of well-to-do parents, educated at the Sorbonne, he was (before Labour) a successful businessman as well as an active Christian. Some Tory MPs found him sanctimonious, but few doubted his sincerity.

He has suffered persistent back trouble, with pain and hereditary victim of glaucoma. This has made him look older than his 53 years, but it has not dulled his zeal. He lives in Keswick, Cumbria, with his Icelandic wife, Gundrun.

Quentin Davies — loud libertarian who failed to win office



WHY did Quentin Davies (right), the Tory MP for super-safe Stamford and Spalding, suddenly come out as a serious backbench rebel in 1996, after nine years of decent, loyal obscurity, MPs were asking themselves again this week.

This time it was his tough cross-examination of David Willetts, the beleaguered postmaster general smothered in the cab-for-questions row. Last February he was one of only two Tory MPs to break ranks over the Scott report on arms sales to Iraq and declare in the tense Commons debate — which the government won — by one — that William Waldegrave had misled the House on changed export guidelines.

Mr Davies, aged 52, urged him to resign to restore ministerial accountability. With his loud, confident, pinstriped shirt, he is, as he seems, a financially-sophisticated and successful merchant banker. Politically ambitious since his Cambridge days, he is widely seen as

rightwing, but one of the most consistently libertarian MPs, according to an Adam Smith Institute analysis of the 1997-98 session.

There was always an independent quirk in his make-up, typical of better-off and better educated Tories. An ardent pro-European, Mr Davies voted against the 1990 War Crimes Bill, supported Michael Heseltine's leadership claims, yet praised Norman Lamont's budgetary courage weeks before the then Chancellor was sacked in 1993.

Last night Tory colleagues were murmuring that his new membership of the Awkward Squad might reflect a familiar pattern: failure to win office when young whipper-snappers like Mr Willetts did.

Andrew Mitchell — junior whip who sparked walk-out



FLEET Street legend has it that the choleric pundit, Paul Johnson, once announced in El Vito's wine bar that "one of the waiters here is a Tory MP." Actually, Sir David Mitchell, MP for NW Hampshire, was not a waiter but a substantial shareholder in the family wine business.

He was also the father of Andrew Mitchell (right), MP for Gedling in Nottingham since 1997, and a junior social security minister. Mitchell Jr was mixed up in the drama over the Hamilton affair because, in 1994, he was the junior whip on the old select committee on members' interests, the first whip ever appointed to it.

It led to ructions and a Labour walk-out. But it did Mr Mitchell no harm. His father, now sitting on the new standards and privileges committee, has had a solidly respectable career since 1964, rising to minister of state rank in the '80s, serving on countless committees. "Right-wing and loyal" is the thumbnail description.

From the start young Andrew was destined to be something more, the beneficiary of Rugby School (known as "Thrasher" for his stern line), Sandhurst and Cambridge where he was president of the Union (1978) and the Conservative Association and a contemporary called him "the most overly-ambitious man I know."

He went on to work for Lazard bank, while dabbling in politics as an activist in Labour (including). He is pro-privatisation, pro-hanging and also backed the NHS — his wife is a doctor — but along the internal market model.

Still only 40, Mr Mitchell is smooth, polite in a sleek way, assiduous, and full of prospects.

Tony Newton — fairness and decency personified



AS CHAIRMAN of the standards and privileges committee, Tony Newton (right) yesterday stepped in to shield David Willetts from some tough questioning.

But his reputation for fairness, sincerity and decency — above all being a man "outside the party brigade" — means he would have done the same for a Labour MP. That reputation helped secure him the highly-prized chairmanship of a committee where impartiality is essential.

The Leader of the House is above all a safe pair of hands, a highly experienced parliamentarian who rose under Mrs Thatcher to become social security minister and is now well respected on both sides for his competence and pragmatism. The worst that can be said of him is that he is lacking in humour.

The man who once confessed to having always been a Conservative, although he didn't know why, first became active politically at Oxford, where he became president of the Oxford Uni-

versity Conservative Association. He spent 14 years in the Conservative Central Office research department — where he perfected his grasp of detail — and was awarded the OBE for his political services in 1972. He was adopted for the marginal seat of Braintree in Essex in the same year, and won it two years later.

Mr Newton has claimed he is not ambitious and is renowned for not being a social climber. To prove it, he sent his two daughters to state schools. His kindness is reflected in a Westminster anecdote that he once took over from his official driver who had a phobia about motorways.

Profiles by Michael White and Rebecca Smithers

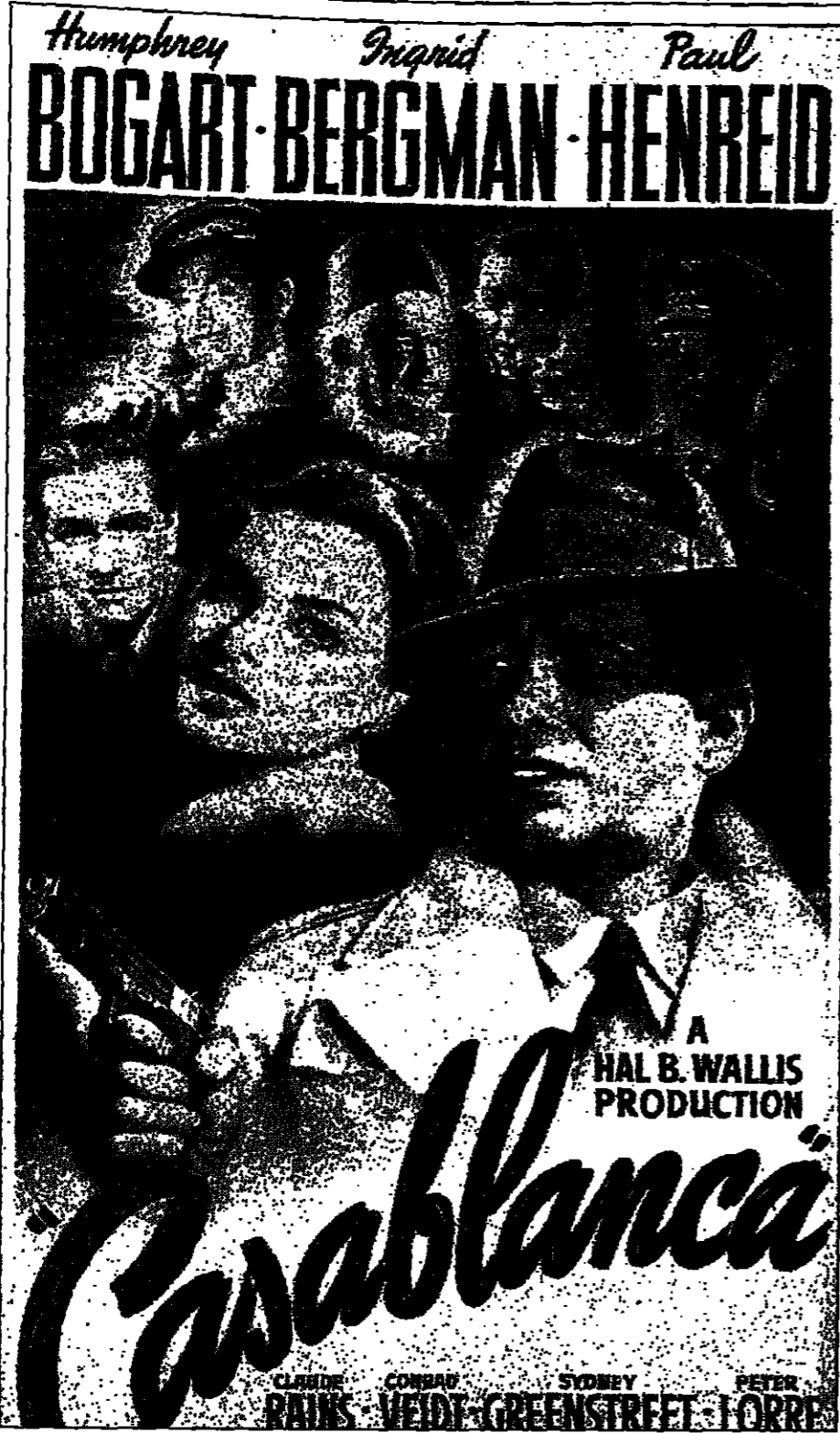
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Posters play it again for film art buffs

Dan Glatzer Arts Correspondent

REPORTS of a recovery in the art market may be exaggerated, but a poster for the 1942 film, Casablanca, sold at auction yesterday for £23,000, almost double the estimate price. The poster was part of the Stanley Caidin Collection, named after an American entertainment lawyer. Over 12 years, starting in the mid-1970s, Mr Caidin amassed one of the biggest film poster collections in the world, featuring items from 1900 to the 1970s. Many of the posters in the sale at Christie's in London had never been at auction. A poster for the 1931 film of Frankenstein starring Boris Karloff sold for £14,500, while one for The King (right), made 10 years earlier and starring Charlie Chaplin, fetched £13,800. Posters for Hitchcock films were particularly popular, a design by Saul Bass for the 1958 film Vertigo, starring James Stewart and Kim Novak, selling for £1,380. A spokeswoman for the auctioneers said most of the buyers were private UK collectors. The buyer of the Casablanca poster bought it simply because he loved the film. It was not until after the first world war that billboard posters came into their own, using movie artists and original designs. Up to that time they had featured an image of a woman holding a card showing film titles and times.



Tories move to scupper EU 48-hour week law

Michael White, Larry Elliott and John Palmer

Key points

JOHN Major's ministers moved swiftly to "close a loophole" in the Treaty of Rome and prevent a predicted flood of backdoor social legislation after yesterday's European Court ruling enforcing the 48-hour working week. With mainstream Tories falling into line behind a frosty letter to Jacques Santer, the European Commission president, and other leaders. From Strasbourg, Mr Santer gave him an instant brush-off, insisting that the Working Time Directive is flexible enough "not to place unnecessary burdens on business". Among other measures, the directive sets the maximum working week at 48 hours, unless unions and employers agree otherwise. At Westminster MPs of all camps were openly suspicious of the Government's declared intention to block all other EU reforms until it gets its way - and confused about the legal status of the disputed directive when it comes into force in Britain on November 23. Ian Lang, President of the Board of Trade, told MPs there would be widespread consultation before legislation to bring Britain into line, if only temporarily. Tony Blair, the Labour leader, predicted that, as with the beef crisis, ministers would "seize on an issue, talk tough, alienate everybody, then cave in" - an "escape route" left until after the election. Mr Lang led claims - hotly denied by pro-Europeans - that yesterday's ruling is the "thin end of the wedge", opening a torrent of social engineering measures. They range from sex discrimination to worker consultation and statutory dismissal procedures - all denounced by ministers as burdensome bureaucracy. In sharp exchanges with the Labour leader in the Commons, the Prime Minister insisted "Britain wants good jobs, not worthless direct-ions". He said he would block the outcome of the Maastricht II review conference until his 14 EU partners gave way - just as he had threatened to block the original 1991 treaty until he got his social chapter set-out. As expected, the European Court of Justice upheld the 1993 directive, providing for holidays, maximum working hours and rest periods under health and safety legislation, which Whitehall says interprets the scope of the Treaty of Rome far more broadly than originally agreed by Britain. In Brussels, ministers and officials were openly scornful. They have already postponed the threatened decision from next month's EU summit in Dublin to Amsterdam in June, when they hope to be dealing with a Labour government.

Police fear 'IRA raiders' escaped with explosives

Terror warning after break-in at London storage depot

Duncan Campbell, Crime Correspondent



A police composite image of one of the IRA suspects

ANTI-TERRORIST police are hunting three suspected IRA members who are feared to have escaped with bomb-making equipment and firearms after breaking into more than 50 storage units in London. The storage depot was opposite the workplace of IRA suspect Diarmuid O'Neill, who was shot dead during a police raid in September, a resident in the road, Richard Fitzpatrick, said. The three men - two of them wearing stocking masks - overpowered and hand-

storage units before making their getaway. The guard managed to free himself from his handcuffs and called the police. He was treated for shock and bruising but was not hospitalised. Police last night warned the public to be vigilant in anticipation of further bombings. Commander John Grievie of Scotland Yard's anti-terrorist branch, said: "There was sufficient evidence left at the scene for us to calculate that this was the IRA. We have strong grounds to believe that... possibly bomb-making equipment and firearms may have been removed from at least one of the storage units. We do not know where that material has been taken. We need that information from members of the public." The three raiders were described as white and were all wearing latex gloves. The one unmasked man was described as aged between 20 and 25, about five foot 11

inches tall and powerfully built. He was wearing a black woolly hat which hid his hair, and a black or very dark loose-fitting car-type coat. Mr Grievie said the suspects had systematically worked their way through the 55 storage units, and "knew precisely what they were looking for". There is no indication if there were traces of explosives were being carried out. The unit from which the material had been removed had been rented for a considerable time, he said. The audacious break-in would seem to indicate that the IRA is both anxious to step up the mainland bombing campaign and is short of the necessary materials. The raid is the latest move in the cat-and-mouse game between anti-terrorist officers and IRA's active service units which has seen a series of arrests and seizures over the past three months. Mr Grievie repeated last month's warning from Scot-

land Yard that the public was in for some "dangerous months". He sought information from anyone who might have witnessed the three men escaping from the raid, or who had information about the suspicious sale of vehicles or the letting of premises. Asked why the men had to break into so many units to find what they were seeking, he said it was possible they

had been given information by a fellow IRA member who knew the approximate location of the equipment but not the number of the actual unit. Last month, for the first time, Scotland Yard launched a poster campaign asking the public to contact police with information, and reminding them of a £1 million reward for information leading to the conviction of IRA members.

Blow to home buyers

Nationwide's mortgage rate rise strains-feelgood factor

Teresa Hunter

THE Nationwide Building Society yesterday announced it was raising mortgage rates, putting strain on the resurgent feelgood factor and sparking fears that borrowing costs are now entering an upward swing. Although other major lenders were waiting for the Chancellor's budget later this month before deciding whether to follow the Nationwide's lead, the move is gloomy news for the Government in the run-up to the general election. Any across-the-board increase is likely to hit the recovery in the housing market, which has played a key role in rekindling the feelgood factor. If Kenneth Clarke cuts taxes in his budget, the pressure will also be towards higher interest rates. The Nationwide, with one million customers, provides one in nine mortgages. Its increase was the first such move in nearly two years. Its mortgage rate will rise

by 0.25 per cent to 6.74 per cent after last month's rise in the bank base lending rate. The rate, which comes into force on December 1, will still undercut the 6.99 per cent typically charged by societies which have become banks. The new rate will push the monthly cost of a typical £50,000 repayment mortgage up by £6.97, to £326.03. Other lenders, such as the Halifax and Abbey National, are waiting to see what impact the move will have on the housing market. A Halifax spokesman said: "We need to see how money markets respond to any tax cuts in the budget. It could be that base rates may rise again - and any new mortgage rate would need to be set in the light of that." The Halifax adopted a similar wait-and-see approach when base rates fell before the budget last year - announcing a rate cut immediately after. The fourth largest lender, the Nationwide is pledged to remaining a building society. In February, as a sign of this

commitment, it cut its rate to 0.5 per cent below the rest of the market giants when it announced a £500 million loyalty package for members. However, its keener rates have made it more vulnerable to the impact of rising money market costs and reduced its scope to delay increases. Its chief executive, Brian Davis, admitted he would not have raised mortgage rates without a move from the Chancellor, but said the society also wanted to be fairer to savers. Six million investors with the Nationwide will now see their savings rates increase by between 0.1 per cent and 0.8 per cent, depending on the account. "We do not believe this will have any impact on the housing market, as interest rates will remain at very low levels historically," Mr Davis said. The Abbey National, Britain's second biggest mortgage lender, said it had no plans to move mortgage or savings rates at present, and the Woolwich took a similar line. However, the much smaller Birmingham Midshires last week announced it was raising its variable mortgage rate from 6.99 per cent to 7.24 per cent while cutting its savings rates for investors.

Carey warns of 'bitter harvest' from school expulsions

Madeline Bunting Religious Affairs Editor

THE Archbishop of Canterbury warned yesterday that expelling disruptive children from schools could lead to them taking revenge on society in future. Dr George Carey warned that young misdeeds in particular have a way of "biting back in spectacular fashion", and pleaded for a considered strategy and sufficient resources to reintegrate them. "If we fail to address with real urgency... the vast problem of angry, disappointed young people who feel that mainstream society has no time or place for them, we shall reap a bitter harvest," Dr Carey told a Society of Local Authorities seminar in central London. He argued that a minority of disruptive children should not be allowed to wreck school communities, but cited a correlation between expulsions and a "subsequent career in delinquency and crime".

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Theatre can be a bitchy place. At the original first night of Martin Guerre, one actor asked another: "What do you think?" Back came the reply: "It's even worse than I'd hoped."

Michael Billington

Arts G2 page 8

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4 BRITAIN

News in brief

BA must pay £3m to Iraq flight hostages

BRITISH AIRWAYS faces a bill of £3 million after losing a French appeal court case involving compensation for Gulf war hostages. Sixty-one French passengers were among 364 people on board a BA flight from London which landed at Kuwait airport on August 2, 1990 — four hours after Iraq invaded. Iraqi soldiers seized the Boeing 747 and passengers and crew were held hostage for up to three months.

The French nationals won their compensation battle against BA in a French court last year, with the airline being ordered to pay about £3 million. Yesterday BA, which has always claimed it had no way of knowing the invasion was under way, lost its appeal, with the Paris court continuing the compensation for all but five of the hostages, for whom it made minor adjustments.

The plaintiffs said BA had committed a "severe error" and demanded compensation for mental anguish. The airline said it found the decision "disappointing" and was considering a further appeal. BA has also denied that a group of SAS commandos was on board the flight.

New child abuse claims

A JOINT police and social services inquiry into the sexual activities of a choirmaster who killed himself the day after being charged with indecency involving a child under 16 has revealed six further allegations against him. It was disclosed yesterday.

Suffolk police said in a statement that their investigation into allegations of child abuse against Christopher Barnett, aged 37, from Holton Road, Halesworth, Suffolk, founder and director of the Wenhamston boys' choir and associated with 18 other similar organisations, had been completed.

The statement said 14 boys were interviewed by child protection officers, and six made allegations of indecency against Mr Barnett. All have been offered counselling.

The new allegations are in addition to the offence Mr Barnett was charged with on September 4 and two other indecency allegations being investigated by police when he committed suicide by jumping from a bridge over the river Orwell at Ipswich the following day. — Alan Watkins

Asthma victim wins £2.4m

A MAN left totally dependent after suffering brain damage during an asthma attack was awarded £2.397 million compensation yesterday. The damages will be paid by the Medical Defence Union, which admitted liability on behalf of Graham Langsdale, a retired GP.

Dr Langsdale, who had a practice in Boscombe, Dorset, was called out to Leslie Drake, a trainee electrician, in West Southborne, Bournemouth, in June 1986. Mr Drake was not admitted to hospital until the early hours of the next day when his condition deteriorated sharply. By then it was too late to prevent brain damage caused by oxygen starvation. Mr Drake, a 38-year-old former Royal Marine, needs 24-hour care at the Grafton Manor rehabilitation home in Northampton.

Woman barred from crew

A CAMBRIDGE university woman student has been prevented from rowing in a college men's first crew.

Jenny Fox, aged 18, is 6ft and 11½ stone, but the Amateur Rowing Association has ruled that, apart from a few exceptions, racing crews may not be mixed.

Ms Fox, a veterinary student at Robinson College, has been rowing for the women's first eight and was asked to step in when a crew member was injured.

Rosemary Napp, national manager of the Amateur Rowing Association, said: "There is a clear division between men's and women's racing. The issue hasn't come up before because women just weren't up to the same level. But we're looking at changing our rules: there is a discussion that open racing — at the top level — should be mixed." — Clare Longrigg

Nursery campaign 'a fraud'

THE Government's £1.9 million advertising campaign to promote nursery vouchers, to be launched today, is untruthful, misleading and political, David Blunkett, Labour's education spokesman, has complained to the Advertising Standards Authority and the Independent Television Commission. More than £1 million has already been spent promoting vouchers in four pilot areas.

After Labour complaints that Michael Heseltine, the Deputy Prime Minister, tried to involve civil servants in a political campaign, Mr Blunkett accused the Government of abusing public information advertising for party political purposes. Vouchers worth £1,000 would land on the doorsteps of families months before a general election, he said. — Donald McLeod

Granada in foreign deal

GRANADA Television yesterday became the first British production company to be commissioned to make drama specifically for the US market. It is to produce a US version of Cracker for ABC, with a US actor in the lead role of criminal psychologist Fitz, played in Britain by Robbie Coltrane.

Andrea Worfor, joint managing director of Granada Productions, said this was the first of a number of international deals. — Andrew Cull



The clean-up operation after the Sea Empress oil tanker spill in February

PHOTOGRAPH: GARRY WEASER

Tanker disaster pilot cleared

Paul Brown
Environment Correspondent

THE pilot of the Sea Empress oil tanker who was demoted after the disaster at Milford Haven, yesterday won the battle to clear his name.

At the same time it emerged that rules governing super-tanker movements into the harbour have been changed to ban entry in the three hours before low water. The Sea Empress was brought in by pilot John Pearn 1½ hours before low tide, and hit the rocks.

The inquiry into the disaster has yet to report, but the clearing of the pilot leaves open whether the rules of navigation decided by the Milford Haven port authority were correct. The "rule of thumb" applied before the accident was that if there was 10 per cent clearance of water below the keel of the tanker it could enter the harbour channel, said Peter Taylor, deputy harbourmaster, yesterday.

Shadow shipping minister Glenda Jackson said she was concerned at the "rush to judgment" which led to Mr Pearn being charged with incompetence. "This [appeal] decision underlines a growing and disturbing trend of

immediately seeking to pass the blame for accidents on to individuals rather than examine the underlying causes of the incident," she said.

Mr Pearn's solicitor, Charles Hattersley, said after the appeal: "He is relieved that justice has been done and he can get on with his job. He is a proud, professional pilot and wants all this put behind him."

Mr Pearn fought the decision of a port disciplinary committee which found him guilty of incompetence after a hearing in June. He was demoted and banned from guiding ships of more than 90,000 tonnes.

Mr Hattersley said: "Mr Pearn regrets the vessel going aground as much as anyone, but these accusations of incompetence were brought against him unfairly. We are now back to the position before he was charged, with no slur on his record."

Mr Pearn's defence team argued that he had correctly calculated the ship's course, but unknown factors contributed to the vessel running aground.

More than 72,000 tonnes of oil poured into the sea when the 147,000 tonne Sea Empress ran aground on rocks near Milford Haven, Pembrokeshire, in February.

Budget to put £150 on council tax

Rebecca Smithers
Political Correspondent

HOUSEHOLDS face an increase in their council tax of at least £150 under the Government's plans to finance tax cuts in the Budget.

The Government has planned for a substantial above inflation rise in council tax, to offset the reduction in central government grant payable to town halls.

Ministers have given numerous strong hints over the past 12 months that they would like to see council tax pay a higher proportion of the cost of local services.

In last year's Budget the Government disclosed that it expected total receipts from council tax to rise by £3.5 billion over three years — equal to 2p on the standard rate of income tax, and equivalent to just over £150 per Band D property, or some £3 extra per week. This typically represents an average family home in the £88,000-£88,000 price range, in the middle of the A-H band range.

Government sources indicated yesterday that in the Budget in two weeks' time a new three-year plan will be given. In the third year, council tax is likely to be forced up even further by more than the

rate of inflation. The rises already pencilled in are because of a freeze in grant aid to town halls, where any increase in spending would have to be funded almost exclusively by council tax.

Last year the settlement for local authorities was seen as extremely unsatisfactory, with councils expected to claw back the supposed increase in funding for education from resources already earmarked for other services.

Yesterday the shadow environment secretary, Frank Dobson, said: "Whether Ken Clarke announces tax cuts in his Budget or not, he is certainly planning to force up council tax." Addressing the annual general meeting of the Association of County Councils in Eastbourne, Mr Dobson said: "The Tories may be giving with one hand. They will certainly be taking away with the other. They will force local people to pay more and get less."

The chairman of the Association of Metropolitan Authorities, Sir Jeremy Beecham, warned that "cost shifting for short-term political advantage would be in no one's long term interest".

This year council tax rose on average 6 per cent, with inflation 2.4 per cent, and the year before it rose 3.2 per cent with inflation of 3.3 per cent.

'Stalker' accuses lecturer of affairs

Sarah Boseley

A WOMAN student accused of stalking her former lecturer yesterday she had made complaints about him "for the benefit of womankind".

Eileen McLardy, aged 50, a mature student, alleged that Robert Fine, also 50, a sociology lecturer at Warwick university, had made a sexual proposition to her, although she refused to say what it was. She also accused him of having affairs with doctrate students.

Dr Fine is seeking an injunction against Mrs McLardy to prevent her molesting or harassing him or coming within 30 yards of his house in Leamington Spa. He alleges that she has persistently stalked him for two years, and is claiming damages over 140 separate incidents. Mrs McLardy is counter-claiming that the lecturer harassed and assaulted her.

Ashley Underwood, counsel for Dr Fine, suggested to Mrs McLardy that she had said the lecturer was having affairs with students to "wound or punish" him. "Would it be such a nice fellow," she replied.

She agreed with Mr Underwood that she had complained about him on behalf of womankind.

Asked if that was rather a lot to take on, she said: "I don't mind, I am a woman. I am used to it."

Judge Thompson QC asked her: "What had he done?" She replied: "Improper conduct. He had made a sexual proposition to me."

The judge asked: "What was the proposition?"

"It was a sexual proposition. I don't think it is necessary as it has no relevance to harassment," she said.

Mrs McLardy's complaint against Dr Fine of sexual harassment was thrown out by the university authorities in August 1994.

The case continues today.



Eileen McLardy: refused to describe 'proposition'

Farm worker denies murder



Stable girl Jessie Hurstone, who died under a hail of blows in a caravan last year

Obsession 'drove man to beat stable girl to death with hook'

Geoffrey Gibbs

A STABLE girl working for leading national hunt trainer Richard Frost was beaten to death with an iron hook by an obsessive male friend who could not bear to see her with another man, a court heard yesterday.

Jessie Hurstone, aged 27, died under a hail of blows in October last year in the caravan she occupied at Mr Frost's Hawson Stables, near Buckfastleigh, in Devon. It was "a vicious and horrible attack", Exeter crown court was told.

Mr Frost's son Jimmy, a jockey, said the man had threatened to kill Miss Hurstone if she had anybody else.

Stephen Webber, aged 39, a farm worker, was said to have run around after the woman like a puppy. He denies murdering her.

Opening the prosecution case, Roderick Denyer QC said Mr Webber had carried out the killing after walking "in the dead of night" across fields from his home half a mile away and breaking into Miss Hurstone's caravan as she lay in bed.

He had picked up the iron hook, used for loading silage bales, that was hanging in a barn close to the caravan.

After changing his blood-



Hawson Stables, in Devon, where Jessie Hurstone, aged 27, worked

stained clothes at home he forced 30 injuries to her head, arms and shoulders. The iron bar had penetrated her brain.

After initially denying the attack, Mr Webber admitted the killing to police, the court heard. Mr Denyer disputed that it was "a spur of the moment thing". It had been set up in advance and coolly executed, he said. "There was only one purpose of taking

that iron bar to that caravan. It was to kill her. He didn't need it to get into the caravan. The idea Mr Webber took the iron bar to frighten Miss Hurstone is a nonsense."

Mr Denyer said that although Mr Webber had been friendly with Miss Hurstone the only evidence of a sexual relationship was what Webber had said about an occasion in 1994. In the summer of the following year he had developed an obsession for her.

On the night she died Miss Hurstone had been out in Buckfastleigh with Jim Pearce, whom she had become friendly with at the beginning of that month.

She returned to the main house at the stables at around 11pm and asked Richard Frost to walk her to her caravan. Her body was discovered the following day.

Mr Denyer claimed that Mr Webber found the idea of Miss Hurstone going out with another man very difficult to come to terms with and that he had told police he had followed her home after she had been to Mr Pearce's house one night earlier that week. "He was watching, keeping an eye on Jessie," Mr Webber said to police that he told Miss Hurstone he had come to teach her a lesson and had hit her in temper.

The trial continues today.

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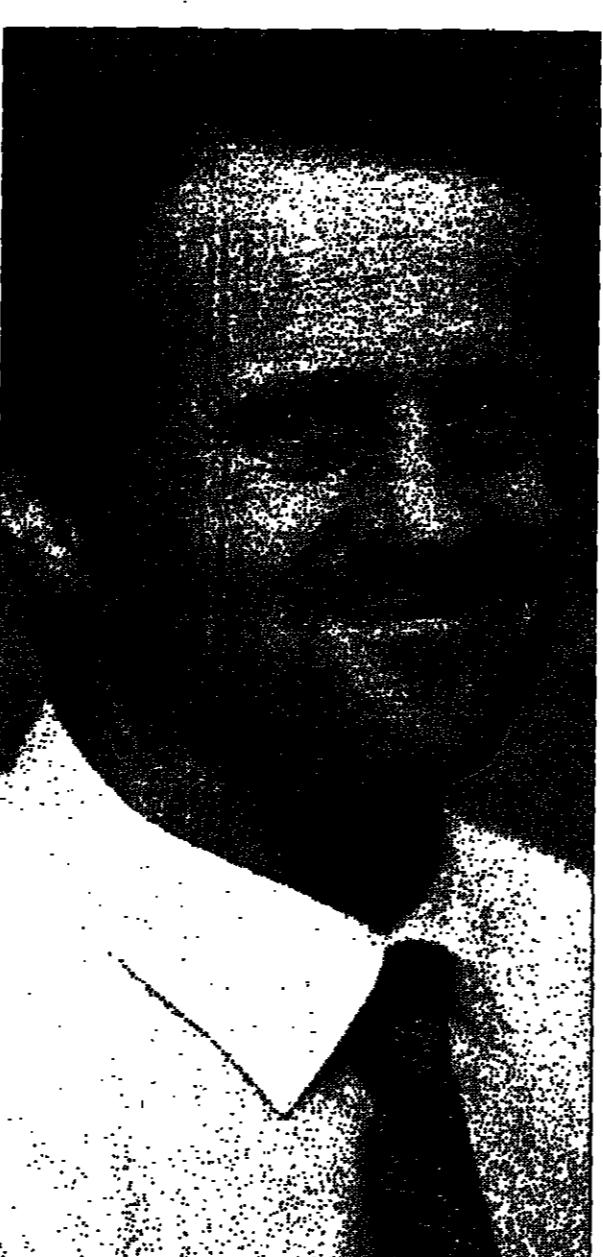
Government defeated in European Court

Four million get extra holiday rights

Seumas Milne Labour Editor

ALMOST 4 million people — just under 20 per cent of employees — will gain extra holiday rights as a result of yesterday's European Court judgment against the Government over the working time directive. More than 2 million will get paid leave for the first time. Rights to three weeks' paid holiday, rising to four weeks in 1999, is the strongest part of the directive — better known for its 48-hour working week limit, which is hedged with exemptions. Holiday entitlement will apply to everyone except transport and fishing workers and junior doctors. Britain is the only country in the European Union without legal holiday rights and 2.5 million — most of whom are part-timers and women — have no paid holiday. Just over 4 million have less than three weeks' leave and 6 million have less than four weeks. The vast majority of those will benefit from yesterday's judgment. Both Labour and the TUC yesterday highlighted the holiday element in response to the Government's onslaught on the directive. Brian Wilson, Labour's campaign spokesman, said it was "by far the most important aspect of the directive", adding that the Tories would be "the only party ever to go into a general election on the platform of taking away holidays from 2.5 million families". The Government faces a complicated legal and legislative tangle over its defeat in Luxembourg, with trade unions determined to press home their advantage and exploit the November 23 deadline by which the directive is supposed to have been implemented. The Trade and Industry Secretary, Ian Lang, promised that the Government would now begin consultations with employers about how to do that. Some European legal experts argue Britain risks losing its right to some of the "derogations" — notably the restriction of the 48-hour limit to compulsory working — if it fails to meet the deadline. That is discounted by others, including the Engineering Employers' Federation, which yesterday called for the Government to agree a realistic timetable with the European Commission to "avoid the spectre of vexatious, politically motivated cases being brought". The CBI pleaded for "clear guidance" from Whitehall. Unions are planning to launch a spate of legal actions against the Government and public sector employers after November 23 over the failure to implement the directive, while holding out to employers the carrot of negotiated agreements over hours, rest breaks and shift arrangements allowed for in the directive. Mr Llang said that the overall cost to industry could be £1.7 to £2 billion — though those were "tentative and provisional figures" and the cost could be much less. Only £100 million of the cost was put down to the 48-hour limit, compared with £500 million for the holiday rights and £900 million for rest break and shift restrictions.

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The company: Filtronic Comtek Product: mobile phone components Location: Saltaire, Bradford Number of employees: 440 in six plants Turnover last year: £34 million

Martin Wainwright Yorksire company to test reaction to the judgment



Employee: 'I have been in situations before where people definitely took advantage of you'

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Working practices

% of full-time employees working 46+ hours across EU

Table showing % of full-time employees working 46+ hours across EU for various countries: UK (16.0), Greece (14.7), Ireland (11.7), Portugal (11.1), Italy (10.9), France (9.3), Spain (8.6), Denmark (8.1), Germany (7.9), Luxembourg (5.5), Belgium (4.1), Austria (3.2), Finland (2.8), Sweden (2.5), Netherlands (1.4).



Manager: 'Our competitors are in Europe and they will be subject to the same rules'

people have had to work more than 49 hours a week. The European Court seems to have chosen a figure in the grey area between too little and too much. "If for example, they had chosen 35 hours, that would have been taking regulation too far. These things come down to a contract between the employer and the employee. At the other end, no one should work ridiculous hours. "The fact that it comes from Europe doesn't bother me at all. Our competitors are in Europe and they will be subject to the same rules. Our competitive edge lies in technological innovation, too, rather than the size of our direct labour bill. It is more important to us that we keep that edge, and that means offering good conditions to attract the best people."

Employee: 'I have been in situations before where people definitely took advantage of you'

native. You couldn't do overtime and you couldn't progress, because there were so many people chasing the same goal. Here, how you do is a reflection of the work you put in. "But people do need holidays. One of our directors went to the US this year and he was quite glad to get home. They have two weeks' holiday. He took his wife and children but didn't see them that much. "The key thing with this sort of regulation is that it should be based on sound advice, and it looks as though in this case it has been. "If they'd made the maximum 35 hours, say, it would have been hopeless. We'd have had to employ a lot more people and the company's progress would have suffered."

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Why all the fuss if Thatcher agreed the terms for reform back in 1986?

What exactly is the Working Time Directive which triggered this showdown? It is part of what pro-Europeans call the social dimension of the EU. It gives workers minimum rights to holidays (including three weeks' paid annual leave, rising to four in 1999), rest breaks and maximum working hours — 48 hours a week, but only as averaged over a four-month period (or longer with union and government agreement). Sounds fair enough. Why the fuss? John Major's government argues that such arrangements are best left to employers and workers to settle according to traditions in each country. Rules imposed from Brussels make Europe uncompetitive and increase unemployment, already 20 million EU-wide. That is why deregulated, super-flexible Britain, which has few remaining statutory workers' rights, insisted on its opt-out from the Maastricht Treaty's social chapter in 1992.

Didn't Margaret Thatcher sign the 1986 Act? Yes, although Eurosceptics don't like admitting it. The pass was sold then, when she agreed to let reforms needed to create the 1992 European single market be agreed by QMV. Lady Thatcher now says she was deceived by the "conveyor belt of federalism". Mr Major argues that using the Health and Safety heading is legislation by the back door to undermine Britain's competitiveness and low non-wage costs. It could add £100 million to hotel and catering costs alone, the industry claims. Aren't there exemptions for some jobs? Lots, including all transport workers, fishermen, doctors in training, decision-making executives, prison officers, journalists, postmen, farm workers, and lots more. In any case, if workers agree to work longer hours, they can. The directive is "highly flexible" says the TUC. Most EU states have their own maximum working week anyway, usually 40 hours, 37 in Denmark.

the EU's Council of Ministers as long ago as November 23 1993, just before Britain's social chapter opt-out kicked in. It so happens that then employment secretary David Hunt, a leading Europhile, did not vote against it. Having watered it down, he boasted the measure was now "toothless", abstained and announced that Britain would appeal against its legality as a health and safety matter. The commission would then have to have it reissued under article 100 — which Britain could veto — or pass it under the social chapter, from which the UK has opted out. But we lost the appeal? Member states were given three years to incorporate it into domestic law. It has taken until almost the last minute to get the court ruling, too late to legislate. As from November 23, the Government could be sued for damages. Hence Mr Major's tough stance.

All this is electioneering really, isn't it? Up to a point. Whitehall and Brussels have strong arguments on their side, worker protection versus labour flexibility. Compromises could be found. But Mr Major wants to play the anti-European card in the election and to accuse Labour of selling out to Brussels. Tony Blair's too cute for that? Indeed. Hence Gordon Brown's wary words to the CBI on social protection this week. Both sides exaggerate the issue's importance. It would make less difference than either claims. Surely, getting tough with Brussels always impresses the voters? Oh, yeah? Try asking them about the beef war which was supposed to end the ban on British exports by November. — Michael White and Seumas Milne

Churchill can insure your car for less. 0800 200 300. A woman who hits a man usually does so only in extreme circumstances, whereas men seem to need little or no excuse to start pummeling their spouses. Francis Wheen. G2 page 5.

Get to 150 on council tax

accuse of affairs

beat hook

6 WORLD NEWS

International force for Zaire

US stalls action to help refugees

Martin Walker in Washington

THE United States, distracted by cabinet reshuffles and its attempt to unseat the United Nations secretary-general, Boutros Boutros-Ghali, was being dragged slowly and unwillingly yesterday into giving token logistical support to a Canadian-led international force for the refugee disaster in Zaire.

American foot-dragging threatened to prevent swift and serious action, as it did two years ago. US officials were stalling on the grounds that there was no clear military goal: was the force intended to safeguard humanitarian convoys, push refugees back into Rwanda or send them back into their old camps in Zaire?

Canada's agreement to lead a multi-national force, and the reluctant acceptance by the Rwandan government of a modest French component, has made some kind of intervention likely.

But the basics of the operation — such as the number of troops, the kind of mandate

The move was 'an outrage against the country which foots the bills'

needed, and how to finance it — are uncertain, victims of the confusion which surrounds all such UN ventures while America remains so deeply ambivalent about them.

"There is no coherent plan, rather four or five proposals running together," the state department spokesman Nicholas Burns said.

The US said the refugees should be encouraged to return to Rwanda rather than be herded back to the over-crowded camps in Zaire.

Mr Burns was careful not to rule out some American involvement in tackling "this terrible humanitarian tragedy".

Canada was taking the lead in planning the intervention yesterday, consulting Britain, France, the US and other interested powers.

But no meeting was scheduled at the UN, where Mr Boutros-Ghali was hoping that a successful inter-

national effort could strengthen his case for staying in office for a second term despite US threats of a veto to exclude him.

Canadian officials hoped that a "firm decision to proceed" could be reached this week. They have offered a specially-trained force of 1,200 lightly armed troops with its own logistic, medical and communications facilities as the keystone of the effort.

Earlier offers from France and Spain to provide troops were stalled by Rwanda's initial refusal to accept French forces, seen as partial to Zaire.

Zairean rebels remain categorically opposed to any French involvement.

UN rules require the intervention's formal approval of the governments of Rwanda and Zaire. The Zairean authority in the eastern region has broken down.

Britain, which was discussing the intervention with Canada yesterday, says it will contribute, but no decision has been taken whether this will comprise troops, logistic support, or emergency finance.

The South African president, Nelson Mandela, supports sending troops in principle, but as with the Malian and Ethiopian offers of troops, this appears to be contingent on the UN raising the funds to finance the mission.

Ironically, the Zaire crisis seems tailor-made for the proposals floated last month by the US secretary of state, Warren Christopher, for an "African Crisis Response Force" with troops from African countries and financial assistance from richer countries, including the US.

But it may have come too soon for such an effort, which provoked criticism from the Republican-run Congress as a dangerously open-ended financial commitment which might draw the US into other unwise interventions, like that in Somalia.

The US, increasingly unpopular at the UN, was voted off an important budgetary committee this week.

Senator Jesse Helms, just re-elected to resume his chairmanship of the foreign relations committee, described it as "an outrage against the country which foots the bills".

It could escalate the row between America and the UN, further delaying any effort for Zaire.



Families in Goma, Zaire, beg for food at the gates of the UNHCR warehouse yesterday, held back by a security guard

Cholera 'could wipe out 250,000 refugees'

Bachkyra Naeeteka in Kigali

CHOLERA has broken out at a hillside settlement of about 250,000 Rwandan Hutu refugees near Bukavu in eastern Zaire and could kill many within days, a doctor said yesterday.

Walter Bonifazio, a member of the UN-funded Doctors in Catastrophic Situations, said the refugees were trapped in Mwenga,

120 miles west of rebel-held Bukavu, east Zaire.

"Cholera broke out at Mwenga on Saturday night, but there is also dysentery and malnutrition. This, put together with the conditions of the 250,000 people, is like putting fuel on fire," Dr Bonifazio said in Kigali.

"The human loss will be impossible to calculate, it is a bomb, a very big bomb, and the people will die like flies unless help reaches them soon."

He said the 250,000

people at Mwenga were being held hostage by the former Rwandan Hutu militia and troops of Rwanda's ousted Hutu army and the Zairean army.

His information is based on radio reports reaching his expatriate colleagues who are still working at Bukavu hospital.

Cholera killed at least 30,000 refugees within weeks of more than one million Hutus fleeing from Rwanda into eastern Zaire in 1994, after the genocide

by Hutu extremists of up to a million Tutsis and others.

Aid workers say thousands of refugees have already died in eastern Zaire and even if a UN force brought aid today, many more would be too sick to save.

The aid agency Médecins Sans Frontières estimated that 1,000 were dying every day. — Reuter.

A fourth Spanish missionary has been presumed murdered in the Bukavu area of Zaire, where they

were aiding refugees fleeing fighting in eastern Africa, the Spanish foreign ministry said.

Although the body of the fourth missionary had not been found he was believed to be dead, said Adolfo Varas Garcia of the Marxist order in Madrid.

Following the announcement, the foreign ministry asked the 38 Spanish missionaries working in the North Kivu and South Kivu areas of Zaire to return to Spain.

Britain defiant in Cuba vote

BRTAIN yesterday underlined its anger at the United States' anti-Cuba legislation by supporting for the first time a United Nations resolution which calls for the US embargo against Havana to be lifted.

All the European Union members backed the General Assembly resolution; in the previous five years they had abstained. Only three countries — the US, Israel and Uzbekistan — voted against.

The vote showed Washington's increasing isolation on the Helms-Burton law, which was introduced earlier this year to penalise countries trading with Cuba.

In a statement after the vote, the EU said: "The European Union wishes to reiterate its rejection of attempts to apply national legislation on an extra-territorial basis."

"We have always rejected attempts by the United States to coerce other countries into complying with the commercial measures it has adopted unilaterally against Cuba."

The EU is challenging the Helms-Burton law in a court newly established by the World Trade Organisation. Britain has been among the most vocal critics of the law.

The Helms-Burton act allows Cuban nationals who became US citizens after the revolution in 1959 to sue in US courts foreign companies or individuals which "traffic" in property confiscated by Fidel Castro's government.

Yesterday's vote was a propaganda boost for Cuba, which sponsored the resolution. It calls on all countries to refrain from promulgating and applying laws and measures "that affect the sovereignty of other countries".

The resolution also expressed Cuba's concern that further measures had been taken against it despite the UN General Assembly's position since 1992, when the resolution was first proposed.

President Bill Clinton signed the Helms-Burton bill into law to woo the Cuban vote in Florida, but suspended for six months a provision which allows legal action against foreigners.

Mr Clinton had hoped to mollify his allies by signalling that he would be willing to extend the waiver when it comes up for renewal in January. But those hopes now look misplaced.

Arabs to shun Israel at economic summit

David Hirst

The soured Middle East peace process is looming over the Cairo forum, writes

THE third Middle East and North Africa Economic Conference, Mena III, opened in Cairo yesterday in a climate of outright hostility — for the *Muhawwajin* are on the run.

The *Muhawwajin* — those who "rush" or "scurry" — are now a key concept in Arab political discourse. The Syrian poet Nizar Kabbani coined the phrase after the Oslo Accord and the historic handshake on the White House lawn between Yitzhak Rabin and Yasser Arafat: "We have queued up like sheep for the slaughter, we have rushed and panted to lick the assassins' boots..."

The rush to "normalise" with a triumphant Israel is now derided by those who see it as a mark of Arab weakness.

Business is at the heart of normalisation, a fact demonstrated by these annual economic jamborees. The original aim was to create a regional economic order of which Israel would be an integral part — economic co-operation would consolidate Middle East peace.

At summits in Casablanca in 1984 and Amman in 1995, Israel led the way in fostering Shimon Peres's vision of a new Middle East, in which pan-Arab institutions would give way to larger ones incor-

US army widens sex inquiry to other bases

Martin Walker in Washington

THE United States army, examining claims of sexual harassment of young female recruits at the Aberdeen training centre, has extended the investigation to at least three other military bases after receiving more than 2,000 calls on a special telephone complaints hotline.

So far, 246 calls have been referred to the army's criminal investigation department. Fifty-six concerned the Aberdeen centre in Maryland.

The army has charged two of Aberdeen's drill sergeants and a captain with coercing sex from young recruits eight weeks into their basic training. Two other sergeants face lesser charges of making "unwanted advances", and 15 instructors have been suspended from duty pending investigations.

The army has promised "zero tolerance" of sexual offences and senior ranks who do not help to stamp out harassment.

"We assume that it could be happening somewhere else, and that is why the army is casting its net very wide across the army," the chairman of the joint chiefs of staff at the Pentagon, General John Shalikashvili, said yesterday.

The new training centres being investigated are at Fort Leonard Wood in Missouri, Fort Knox in Kentucky, and Fort Jackson in South Carolina.

The army has sent questionnaires to more than 1,000 women who went through Aberdeen in the past 18 months to see if they were harassed.

Why should we take part when Israel is preparing for war?

al-Ahram. "Why should we take part in an international economic gathering supposedly designed to underpin regional peace and security with economic co-operation when Israel rejects peace and is preparing for war?"

For a while it looked as if Mena III would not convene at all. President Hosni Mubarak threatened to cancel the summit if Israel continued to renege on its peace commitments. He only relented under intense US pressure, and because Egypt, anxious to advertise its privatisation drive, has more to gain from it than Israel.

The scurrifiers are now backtracking. Jordan has only sent a medium-level delegation: King Hussein is less ready to stick his neck out now that almost every political party in his kingdom has called for "an end to all forms of normalisation with the Zionist enemy".

Mr Arafat has reluctantly agreed to send a delegation to Cairo, but the West Bank businessmen's association is boycotting the conference, saying that Palestine "got nothing" out of Casablanca and Amman because of Israeli restrictions.

Qatar has postponed the opening of a liaison office in Tel Aviv and frozen its natural gas deal. Other governments have reportedly told their delegations to make no deals with the Israelis.

The Egyptian hosts make no secret of it since Israel is going back on the peace process, the Arabs should go back on the basic objectives of Mena I and II, and turn Mena III into a forum for inter-Arab business alone.

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The Gandhi papers

G2 cover story

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Free-market food summit condemned

John Hooper in Rome

THE World Food Summit opens here today to a chorus of protest from charities who argue it will merely serve to endorse a set of free-market principles favouring the richer countries.

The final declaration, agreed in advance, commits the international community to strive for food security "through a fair and market-oriented world trade system". In pre-summit statements, several charities argued that a market-led system could not be a just one.

Save the Children denounced the summit as a "forum for legitimising a new international code of practice which basically subordinates basic rights to the market philosophy".

Actionaid claimed that free trade was among the "main causes of food insecurity".

Oxfam said: "Enhanced competition between the surplus agricultural systems of the industrialised world and the deficit systems of the developing world will exacerbate problems of food dependency and destroy the livelihoods of vulnerable communities."

The nub of the charities' argument is that trade cannot be fair while the rich countries subsidise their farmers and allow the trading of grain to remain in the hands of half a dozen transnational companies.

The World Development Movement said yesterday that the biggest, Cargill, had an income equivalent to that of the nine largest sub-Saharan African countries.

The charities argue that the removal of tariff barriers can only undermine Third World food production and force it

to become dependent on imports, particularly of United States grain.

Oxfam's research paper quotes Hubert Humphrey telling a congressional commission in 1967: "If you are looking for a way to get people to lean on you and be dependent on you, in terms of their co-operation with you, it seems to me that food dependence would be terrific."

Save the Children was concerned that global cereal stocks were being kept at their lowest levels for years in the search for more market-sensitive pricing.

At the Istanbul, Beijing and Cairo UN conferences, which dealt with cities, women and population, there were divisions between governments and between the non-governmental organisations (NGOs). This time, with the governments of the First and Third Worlds having already agreed on the declaration, the stage is set for a straight clash between officialdom and the NGOs.

Charitable organisations say that a unique opportunity has been lost to extract commitments to the eradication of hunger. According to the Food and Agriculture Organisation (FAO), the Rome-based UN agency which is staging the summit, more than 800 million people in the developing world are suffering from undernutrition.

The conference aims to halve the number by 2010. And it is not seeking any pledges of assistance from the First World.

Christian Aid said yesterday: "There will be little to show for the Rome meetings unless governments are pushed to follow it up. The agreed actions are purely voluntary and there will be no new money on the table — the real measure of commitment."



Two works by Ingres - Tête de Jupiter (above) and Portrait de père Desmarests (right) - are among the unclaimed works looted mainly from Jewish families during the second world war which are now being shown on the Internet



Museums, stung by claims that they have dragged their feet in tracing the owners of 2,000 paintings stolen by the Nazis from private collections which together are worth millions of pounds, are trying a hi-tech tactic to silence the critics. **Paul Webster in Paris reports**

France turns to Internet to display looted artworks

FRENCH museums are creating a pictorial catalogue on the Internet of 2,000 paintings and other works of art, together worth millions of pounds, in an effort to trace the owners of unclaimed masterpieces recovered from Germany after the second world war.

In a further attempt to silence critics who claim that the French government has not tried hard enough to find the owners of looted artwork, an inter-

national meeting of government representatives and museum officials was held at the Louvre in Paris this weekend. The 2,058 unclaimed works, including Impressionist paintings, notably 12 by the English artist Alfred Sisley, and pictures by Ingres, Boucher and Chardin, were among 60,000 pieces looted from private French collections which were discovered in Germany. Most belonged to Jewish

families who were isolated by the Vichy regime's Jewish Statute in 1940 and later sent to Germany where they died in concentration camps.

About 76,000 Jews of French and foreign origin were deported. Hiding on their homes by the Einsatzstab Rosenberg, a commando of art experts working for Herman Goering, amassed thousands of works of art.

French state-run galleries which exhibit or stock

unclaimed paintings have been criticised since revelations that many countries have been reluctant to release looted Jewish assets.

But the director of the Musée de France, Françoise Cachin, said: "Contrary to a commonly held view, state-run galleries have nothing to hide and have never spared efforts to give back works to their rightful owners."

She said the French paintings had been exhib-

ited twice in the 1950s and were regularly checked against an inventory of plundered works.

By 1949, 45,000 looted objects had been returned and thousands more sold, she said. Since the reunification of Germany, a further 25 important artworks have been recovered, seven of which have been returned to their owners.

Only a tiny portion of the 1.6 million Swiss francs (£270,000) found in 11

recently investigated dormant Swiss bank accounts belonged to Jewish victims of the Holocaust, the country's banking ombudsman said yesterday.

"It was around 11,000 Swiss francs (£5,800)," Hanspeter Haeni said. Five of the account holders appeared to be Jewish. In the other six cases it was either unclear whether the owner was Jewish or clear that the accounts became dormant before or long after the Holocaust.

Spanish miners strike over plans to end subsidies

Adela Gooch in Madrid

MINING communities in the northern Spanish province of León began a general strike yesterday, marching through the streets in angry protest at government plans to phase out subsidies to the coal industry.

The protests, which began with a one-minute blackout on Monday night, were led by 8,000 pit workers. They herald further strikes in other mining areas — notably Asturias, on the northern coast.

Many pits in León, where shops and schools closed for the two-day strike, are in private hands but will be badly affected by the government's proposals to, in effect, kill off the unprofitable industry.

Some factory workers also joined the protest, which has the backing of many town

councils in the region. The lights on León's cathedral were dimmed and its bells tolled 90 times.

The miners want the government to reverse its plan to lift subsidies on Spanish coal and let power companies choose where they obtain supplies.

But their days are numbered. Spanish coal is of low quality, as well as costing 25 times as much as South African coal, and 20 times as much as United States coal.

The conservative government, planning to sell off state-owned power companies as part of an effort to open up heavily protected industries, says the measures are needed to meet the Maastricht criteria for monetary union.

But a vigorous response from the unions forced the industry minister, Josep Figue, to soften his initial plan.

£3bn 'missing' from EU coffers

Stephen Bates in Strasbourg

MORE THAN £3 billion of European Union funds is missing, according to the latest annual audit. The money, mainly destined for approved projects in member states, appears to have been mispent.

Auditors calculated that funds would have been lost to agricultural fraud and corruption in areas traditionally under suspicion, such as South European olive oil production, but also the misapplication of funds by member states and their failure to collect customs dues.

They estimated that 80 per cent of the money that went astray was the responsibility of the member states and 20 per cent was down to Brussels.

The commission promised yesterday in the wake of the report to enforce stricter controls on how EU finance is spent on roads and structural projects.

Ericki Laitanen, the Finnish commissioner responsible for budget accounting, said: "It is not pleasant to listen to errors and mistakes in financial management. People usually say that errors occur in other countries but there is no scientific basis for that. It happens across the board."

He said the commission would take up the matter at the heads of government summit in Dublin next month, putting forward proposals for tighter accountability rules for

the disbursement of structural funds. This would mean that EU money given to projects which were not eligible could be reclaimed.

The Court of Auditors, the independent accountability body in Luxembourg which carried out the audit, reached the £3 billion figure — 0.9 per cent of the EU's £54 billion annual budget — by extrapolating from a series of spot-checks on expenditure.

A commission report earlier this year estimated that about £200 million — 0.9 per cent of the annual budget — was mispent, two-thirds of it by member states. The commission claimed yesterday that much of the money estimated as missing would be accounted for if member states had committed errors in distributing EU finances.

The auditors' report points to long-standing problems in the common agriculture fund such as double accounting of olive oil, caused by the failure of Southern member states to institute proper recording procedures.

It estimates that millions of pounds were lost by the failure of governments to collect customs dues or to track down frauds in agricultural export refunds.

The problem is such that 10 per cent of the £200 million allocated to fight fraud cannot be accounted for. The report suggests that that may be because not all the paperwork was available.

The EU budget is 1.2 per cent of the gross national products of member states.

Plan to limit TV imports fails to pass parliament

ATTEMPTS led by British Labour MEPs to ensure that more than half the programmes shown on European television are made in the European Union failed to win a sufficient majority in the European Parliament yesterday, writes Stephen Bates in Strasbourg.

The proposal that at least 51 per cent of programmes and videos should originate in Europe was aimed at safeguarding jobs in the industry and warding off the flood of

United States imports. The plan, opposed by most EU governments, was supported by 291 to 170 votes in Strasbourg, but fell 23 votes of an absolute majority.

Parliament adopted proposals to ensure that major sports events continue to be available on free television channels, and that talks should start on installing so-called v-chips in all new television sets to enable parents to vet their children's viewing.

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Britain defiant in Cuba vote

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Bashing Brussels again

But wait: wouldn't less hours mean more jobs?

THE GOVERNMENT'S fierce resistance to the European Court of Justice's ruling on a 48-hour maximum working week owes much more to appeasing its Eurosceptic wing and positioning itself against the Labour Party than it does to the underlying merits of the case.

What is at issue is not whether people ought to work a 48-hour week but whether they should be compelled to. The judgment of the European Court exempts lots of key workers - like nurses, junior hospital and transport workers - altogether and the rest are only affected if they are forced to work against their will for an average of 48 hours over a four-month reference period that can be extended by agreement to six or even 12 months.

Surely the Prime Minister doesn't seriously think that Britain's prosperity is dependent on people working over 60 per cent of their waking days (excluding travelling time) for most of the year, leaving very little time for the family values the Conservatives so enthusiastically espouse.

As the Liberal Democrat trade spokesman Nick Harvey said yesterday: "If there are many companies who are forcing people to work more than 48 hours and not even giving them three weeks' holiday, they jolly well shouldn't be."

Perhaps MPs should try two or three weeks' holiday a year themselves instead of three months (and that's just the summer bit) to see what it's like. The ruling is fully justified by the health risks attached to arduous hours, as the Government's own report, prepared by Professor Harrington of Birmingham University, indicated (even though the Government

didn't publish it). He argued that there was plenty of medical evidence to show that a 48-hour week was bad for health. In these circumstances, a judgment laying down limits to compulsory working will be a constraint on exploitative employers while allowing long hours to be worked on a jointly agreed basis.

This leaves the crucial question: whether it is economically sensible for people to be working such long hours when millions have no job at all. There is no mechanical relationship between overtime and unemployment though some economists, like Paul Gregg of the National Institute, argue that if the long-term reduction in hours worked (from 57 hours a week in 1980) had continued into the 1990s, instead of grinding to a halt, then a million extra jobs could have been created.

According to the Employment Institute, total hours worked in spring 1995 were up 31 million compared with three years earlier, a rise of 3.5 per cent so a lot of the extra wealth was earned by people in employment rather than those looking for work. Since a lot of overtime is at premium rates, it could actually be cheaper for companies to employ more fresh people at ordinary rates to do the work instead of leaving its existing labour force almost certainly tired from such long hours.

If unemployment declined, then the Government too would gain from not having to shell out so much unemployment pay. Mr Major has his own motives for adopting the stance he has and part of it may be to force Labour into a stance which is more in favour of regulation and rule from Brussels.

But if he thinks there are lots of votes to be won by forcing employees to work long hours with short holidays, then he must have been talking to some pretty strange people. Maybe he should get back to his soapbox quickly to find out what people are really thinking.

Europe's fraud mountain

Don't bash Brussels this time either: it's not their fault

THE European Commission's publication exploding popular myths about Europe is available in only one language - English. Yesterday provided a useful illumination of why it is needed. "Billions lost by bungling in Brussels" announced the Daily Telegraph's headline, adding "... as Major warns EU on 48hr week". As it happens, the two events in question - the annual report of the European Court of Auditors on the EU budget and the European Court ruling on the EU working-hours directive - were entirely separate. But in the present atmosphere of anti-European suspicion, these important distinctions pass for nothing.

There can be no disputing the shoddy state of budgetary control exposed in the EU auditors' report. Some of the errors are fraudulent, though most of them are caused more by incompetence, mismanagement and sloppiness. There are clearly particular problems in the operation of EU's social fund. Yet, contrary to the impression given by those "bungling by Brussels" headlines, it is national governments and delivery agencies which are responsible for most of the deceptions and wastages detailed in yesterday's report, and not the European Union. Most of the problems lie in southern European nations not northern ones, and while it is true that fraud and poorly audited delivery systems are not unknown in this country (as Peter Lilley never tires of explaining) it is against the responsible governments that indignation

ought to focus, not on the lazily familiar target of "Brussels". For all that, this is the second year running in which the auditors have refused to certify the legality of what is going on. Six per cent of all payments in the EU may be affected - more than £3 billion out of a total of £55bn. These are disgraceful failings. They would not be legal in a commercial company and they should not be tolerated here either.

However unfairly, these revelations hurt the European Union generally. To the Europhobe press, they are simply additions to the Any Stick To Beat A Dog category into which most British debate about Europe has now descended and which has now produced another absurd piece of Euro-posturing by the UK government over the working-hours directive. This endlessly negative and hostile approach in London is very damaging. But the European political class should not ignore the mood in this country over these revelations. Waste and fraud are rightly unacceptable. They undermine faith in the trustworthiness of the European Union much more widely than the single currency. Coming at a time when far too many European governments are too ready to fiddle their own budgetary figures in order to get their economies into line for the single currency, they dangerously widen the European credibility gap. Europe's rulers should be in no doubt. People are right to be sceptical about a house that cannot keep itself in order.

Disaster in the crowded skies

The Delhi tragedy has lessons for the rest of the world

MID-AIR COLLISIONS are still so rare that yesterday's disaster near Delhi may be regarded as an appalling tragedy but a wholly exceptional one. At least that is what the statistics show. The world's worst air disasters have only involved single aircraft, with the exception of two collisions (one on the ground) some 20 years ago. Yet it would be a mistake to confine this latest catastrophe to such a narrow bracket. Genuine mid-air collisions - that is between planes at or near cruising height - are almost non-existent. But this accident occurred within a few minutes of the planes either landing or taking off, which puts it in a very different category.

It has long been recognised that the maximum risk to planes occurs when they are, separately, in such a situation. As air traffic increases, so does the complexity of flight paths. Delhi is South Asia's busiest airport and this

accident occurred in the particularly hectic period of the early evening. The fact that a small, ex-Soviet airline was involved may or may not be relevant. The usual concerns about air traffic control will be raised. A combination of factors may, by ill chance, have been responsible. But every accident has to be looked at afresh.

Air travel remains - as we are always being told - the safest form of transport. But a price has to be paid, even if it is statistically very small, for allowing an increasing volume of traffic to occupy virtually the same airspace to satisfy commercial demands. The authorised vertical separation between these two planes - 1,000 feet - may be regarded as very close for comfort. In Britain's crowded skies, near-misses are regularly reported under similar conditions. This tragedy should prompt a long moment of cautious reassessment elsewhere.

Leading the World!!



Letters to the Editor

Mr Redwood, in need of respect

JOHN Redwood's article in our schools, November 12, seems to have been written by some bumbling Colonel Blimp from another age, full of bland mouthings based on a failure to understand the sort of lives people actually live - or indeed the effects of his own government's policies. One of these extraordinary pronouncements equates "gangs roaming the streets at night" with the assumption that "the local secondary school lacks leadership", resting on the assumption that had the school enjoyed "leadership" the youths would have "burnt off their energy on the soccer pitch".

Because of his government's policies, "soccer pitches" are for many schools things of the past, having been sold off. Besides, the National Curriculum leaves little time for games. Trisha Gilbert, Stac Polly, Crayke, York YO6 4TB.

JOHN Redwood has left me almost speechless with rage. How dare he write an article for any newspaper, let alone the Guardian, which is so patronising and so much rife, hackneyed and offensive views? I quote: "I am the first to agree that parents should not beat their children senseless." Is there anyone who holds such a view? Teachers are blamed for the gangs roaming the streets at night. Again: "It must be difficult for a 13-year-old girl to be a mother..." Since there has been a Conservative government for all of the 13-year-old's life, perhaps she needs a change of political party? Kate Little, 18 Ellesmere Drive, Nottingham NG9 3PE.

The generation game

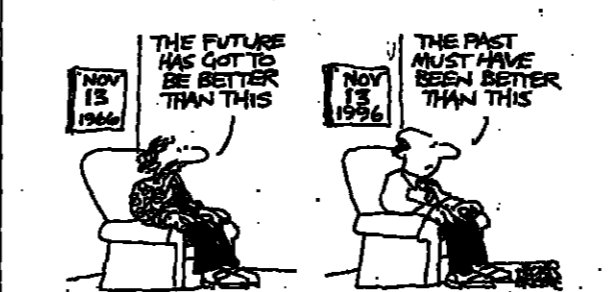
MARTIN Jacques (Decline and fallacy, Essay, November 9) suggests that the sixties were not really a better moral time. But while many of us were active in Anti-Apartheid and supporters of homosexual-law reform, and believed a Labour government would improve life in Britain by increasing equality, Martin was an unrepentant old Stalinist in the Communist Party. He believed the Berlin Wall was a good thing; that the continued Soviet occupation of Eastern Europe was necessary and that a Labour government should be undermined rather than supported.

The sixties were not about clinging to an idealised view of the "family", but the easing of restrictive and oppressive boundaries on personal freedom. David Townsend, 39 Warwick Gardens, Worthing, Sussex BN11 1FF.

MARTIN Jacques compares the "largely stunted existence" of his parents with the world of multi-media, overlapping circles "we live in" today. But the "we" he refers to is that of upwardly mobile metropolitans, free-wheeling their way from television studio to think-tank office convinced that their way of life is the norm. What is most revealing about the current debate on

morality is the way in which the agenda has been set by members of the political class whose life-styles are so remote from those of the mass of the population, many of whom continue to lead atomised existences. I Morgan, 36 May Crescent, Lincoln LN1 1LP.

MARTIN Jacques downplays the greed and selfishness embodied in economic policy-making. He speaks for the influential part of society in a relatively secure position as to income and earnings. The company managers who shed labour are comfortable, as are the professional workers and bureaucrats, who do not fear unemployment very deeply. The same applies to many manual workers - low inflation is fine if you have a secure income. But government expenditure on employment will add to the deficit and create the spectre of tax increases. For a substantial part of the population, the unemployment equilibrium is to be preferred to the relevant corrective measures. Better to blame the "lack of skills" of the unemployed than to endorse the morality of an alternative economic strategy, with its echoes of a Marxist past. John Moore, 11 Meadow Street, Coventry CV1 3LW.



A working week is a long time in politics

THE imposition of the 48-hour maximum working week (Major defiant on 48-hour week, November 12) will highlight the fact that, in many occupations, because of different attitudes towards travel, tea breaks, working lunches, preparation periods, etc - there is no consensus as to what actually counts as "work". Thus the aggregation of an employee's performance is not a matter which can be resolved by the simple introduction of a tachograph-like device. But to what extent will any perceived disadvantages of the

ruling be offset by fewer accidents at work, a reduction in payments necessary to cover absence during sickness (including stress), improved opportunities for people to spend time with their families, and in the sort of self-development which may, ultimately, be to the advantage of their employers and society as a whole? David Ainley, 41 The Hill, Condonford, Matlock, Derbyshire DE4 3RF.

I AM delighted that Hugo Young has become converted to the idea that the European social model is not

well served by rigid employment rules (Get real about job creation in Europe, November 12). I have gone further to point out that the arguments over the single currency are inescapably linked with this issue and with any attempt to harmonise a European social model. If one examines the rest of Europe, rigid employment rules have had no significant effect - a massive increase in the number of unemployed. Bill Cash MP, Chairman, The European Foundation, 61 Pall Mall, London SW1Y 5HZ.

Mr Willetts, in want of honesty

ONCE again we are faced with the ridiculous sight of politicians in a hole turning to linguistic sophistry as a way out (Minister accused of lying, November 12). We've had Alan Clark - who was "economical with the facts" (The Michael Howard, with his "operational matter". Now we have David Willetts, who would have us believe that "he wants advice" really means "he is in want of advice", and who regrets that he "structured" an "unstructured conversation".

This imaginative use of language could only operate within Westminster. It will not rebuild public confidence in politicians. Slezace cannot be swept away by one select committee. We need a political system which operates by rules which we can all understand and have access to. Perhaps that we will get politicians who speak in plain English. Andrew Paddelphatt, Director, Charter 88, Barnwood House, 3-11 Pine Street, London EC1R 0JH.

LETTER David Willetts is lying to protect his salary and his reputation, or he really does sometimes use "wants" in the old-fashioned sense of "needs". I suggest a search through past speeches in Hansard, to find out how often he has said things like "what criminals want is firm punishment" and "the committee wants sound advice" (in cases where it had clearly not asked for it). A few cases of "what the health service is in want of..." would be helpful. If we find a reasonable number, fair enough; if we don't... Philip Thonemann, 16 Shakespeare Road, London NW7 4BB.

FEEL sure thousands will wish to join me in congratulating Sir Geoffrey Johnson-Smith for booking his place in the Lords. I always thought Mr Smith was awfully good on Antonio. The Tonight programme on BBC some years ago. And his hair was always immaculate. George Willoughby-Houghton, 106 Queensgate, London SW7.

FOR all their public-school talk about honour and values, the Tories haven't got any. Given the opportunity to show some integrity, they prefer to tell pack of lies. Arthur Gould, 105 Park Road, Loughborough LE11 2SD.

Ornithology

I WOULD like to clarify a few points regarding your City Column of October 26 about fund take-overs. There was no "vulture fund" operated by Peregrine. Hermes, as long-term holders (16 per cent of the fund) asked Peregrine to help gather other stockholder support to join us in realising shareholder value. As a result of our action, which was supported by 95 per cent of shareholders, the fund is now open-ended and therefore trades at NAV, rather than up to a 58 per cent discount seen in previous years. We consider this action to be totally consistent with the exercise of good corporate governance and was to the advantage of all shareholders. Allan B Conway, Director of Overseas Equities, Hermes Investment Management Ltd, 21 Mansell Street, London E1 6AA. Please include a full postal address, even on e-mailed letters, and a telephone number. We may edit letters.

The BBC is losing its voice

WE are deeply concerned about the consequences of John Birt's planned reorganisation of the BBC (BBC merges radio and television production, November 7). The implications are profoundly disturbing. The main aim is to enable the BBC to grab the commercial pickings of digital broadcasting. The thrust is towards homogenisation with the commercial sector. The emphasis is on delivery rather than content. If the range of voices on the BBC is diluted for commercial expediency, the country will be the poorer. The BBC will have lost its distinctive remit, there will be no need for the licence fee and public-service broadcasting will be dead. The proposed division between the editorial, commissioning and scheduling department, and the programme-making department, ignores the fact that the writing and making of quality radio and television drama can flourish only as an organic process. The best programme-makers and writers can come up with

the most suitable suggestions only if they are aware of the thinking behind commissioning policy. The BBC's restructuring processes have excluded creative artists. The Writers' Guild was not approached for input. Nor have writers any clear idea of how we will be expected to liaise in the future, either with BBC Production (which will make our work) or BBC Broadcast (which will commission it). How does BBC management intend to keep its 250 promises to its viewers and listeners? Alan Ayckbourn, David Croft, Alan Drury, Ray Galton, Frank Muir, Jimmy Perry, Harold Pinter, Alan Plater, Jack Rosenthal, Willy Russell, John Willsler, Victoria Wood, and four others. Writers' Guild of Great Britain, 430 Edgware Road, London W2 1EH.

A Country Diary

THE WRINKLE: "Winter's returning song" awakes this year as a stillness; a quiet sunrise on silver-grey frosts which fix the landscape in a moonlit glow. The day is bright and blue, still and strangely quiet. Evening falls early with cold, glamorous sunsets. On the way to the Little Hill at the southern end of the Wrekin, the sky is like a huge burning shore with dark wooded islands sailing through it. Arriving at the top of the hill - too late to see the sun disappear into the Stippenzooes - the lingering sunset colours of that flaming ocean of the west begin to bleed from the sky and into the woodlands. The saffron glow of larches, and the inky blue-green oaks and pines, have for a brief, dying moment. All around the Shropshire countryside are pools and streams of mist and, like the mists, the sounds of the landscape are separated by a cool, still space. Without a breath of wind, the plume of steam from the sugar-beet fac-

tory stands erect, where the sweet soils of the lowlands are turned to sugar. The last flash of light sparks from a meander in the Severn and a small pool against a dark wood. Just as darkness grips, all the pheasants begin their clockwork alarm together. The birds make a final communal salute to the light, which spreads across the west until it fades like the sound of a high-speed train into the east. Then the owls start. The first voice has lost all trace of summer's softness now and has a harsher, rasping screech: the sound of cold pine needles in the dusk. Other owls answer from the dark. Impenetrable boundaries of their woods. Suddenly, the ghostly forms of antlered bodies flicker, their sharp hooves crackling through the static of crisp leaves into the deepest night of trees. One star above the branches, north and darkness. PAUL EVANS

Handwritten note: كتاب من الاميل

Diary

John Duncan

HARRODS, the Kensington supermarket, is never knowingly underpriced, but the £1 charge for its toilets is perfectly justified by the gorgeous surroundings provided for top people to point Sir Percival at the antique porcelain. However, the fee has proved such good value that the toilets have become a profit centre in their own right, according to senior toilet executives at the store. Those who smirk and suggest that the company is thus making money out of posh crap, à la Ratner cut-glass decanter, are heading for a slap. Indeed, Harrods' generosity knows no bounds. If you spend £100 in the store you can now pee for free. Three cheers for the A Fayeds.

SECOND instalment of the sensational serial-killer lead from November 5 Lynn News. Our amputee hero has been caught with £200 of fake £20 notes in his pants. The story continues. Mark Van Der Zwart, prosecuting, told the court that the defendant had offered one of the duds notes to a prostitute in Wisbech on December 19 last year but before accepting it she had tested it and found it was a fake. "Is that a counter or a pencil in your pocket or are you just pleased to see me? More tomorrow."

TARA Palmer-Tomkinson has proved to be hot competition for the most self-important social column — last week's Sunday Times "article" was illustrated with a picture of her and her sister — but TP-1 is different class. Various theories abound on why she calls herself the It Girl. Nicholas Frampton-Green suggests from Monaco that it is because she is too busy going to parties to make up her mind whether she is male or female, while a close pal Willy Van Der Kerkhof tells us from Grand Cayman that it is because she is one of Europe's leading experts on Information Technology.

It certainly can't be anything to do with her being incredibly cool, judging by reports of her behaviour at the party for The First Wives Club. TP-1 was keen to chat up Val Kilmer, who had taken up his position outside the ladies' toilets. She wasn't having much luck, but it took more than a totally bored stare out of an It girl, and TP-1 drew on all her school-disco social graces to get her man. "Oh do come to the Grand with us," said it. "There'll be lots of pretty girls there." Wow, cool line. If only we were it people too.

THE tedious hand-wringing over Crash — the Cronenberg auto-erotic film — has had one beneficiary. So upset by the sex 'n' shunting film were the speakers of public morals that they failed to notice an incident at the London Film Festival far more suitable for helping them on to their high horses. Some Mother's Son, about the hunger strikes Bobby Sands and directed by former INLA prisoner Terry George, was scheduled for first British viewing at the LFF last Sunday. Which of course is Remembrance Sunday and not, them, suitable at all. Happily the error was realised in time and the screening goes ahead next week.

MICHAEL Heseltine turned up for a speaking engagement yesterday without his reading glasses, and was unable to see his speech until a spare pair was found from the audience. Could this explain why the line between right and wrong on using civil servants for party-political work seemed so blurred the other day?

AS YOU probably already know, the latest Thierry Mugler male fragrance (what used to be called after-shave) is launched today. It's called A*Men and one of the ingredients is tar. The tar evokes the memory of long and lazy journeys along American highways, "said a smelly PR. Presumably then a hint of four-day-old underpants, left-over burgers, the sweat of an over-flowing ashtray are also in there somewhere too. Hang on a mo' Mr Mugler. Someone in the office is wearing it already. Counterfeit!

WE THOUGHT IT MIGHT BE FUN TO TRY IT FOR THE MILLIONTH TIME

Bullies behind the net curtains

Commentary Catherine Bennett

FOR some time it has been hard to imagine which, if any, activities could conceivably preclude admission to the House of Commons. If an MP can maintain five concurrent sexual partners, or accept money for questions, or drink-drive his car into toddlers, or assault road protesters, and still claim the right to govern, can there be any limits to the indulgence of this most forgiving of institutions? All at once, it seems there are. One thing the Commons cannot abide, and simply will not tolerate, is the prospect of a man who is said to beat his wife.

Which is why the Labour Party is still searching for a replacement for Ian Wingfield, its candidate in the impending Wirral South by-election. He has dropped out following allegations by a newspaper that he had once assaulted an ex-girlfriend,

and had also set upon his ex-wife. Wingfield has described these allegations as "untrue rumours", but has decided to stand down. Had he been elected an MP, Wingfield might well have been consulted by battered women in his own constituency. Besides, everyone agrees that domestic violence is intolerable. Only last week, Janet Anderson, Labour's Shadow Minister for Women, said: "Domestic violence against women is something that should not be tolerated in a civilised society."

Agreed — but how do we go about not tolerating it? A resolute refusal to protect the House of Commons from alleged wifebeaters, but what the Mail on Sunday has done for Wingfield, all the might of tabloid Britain has been unable to do to Geoffrey Boycott. According to EBC spokesman, the recent allegations of assault by Margaret Moore have "no bearing" on Boycott's commentating career. Boycott denies Moore's story, saying that she fell on the floor as he tried to "restrain" her, somehow contriving to black both her own eyes.

Again, in the case of Paul Gascoigne, people seem uncertain how outraged they should feel about domestic

violence. "It is his private life and not for me to interfere," said Rangers' football club's vice-chairman. On the other side, prominent women queued up to denounce Gascoigne's selection as an affront to justice, a lamentable signal to the nation's youth. The most memorable reaction came from Joan Bakewell: "His reputation should be spat upon," she said. "I would prefer it if he were to pass out of public life altogether."

Most women commentators seemed to agree. Domestic violence could never be a private matter: it was part of a continuum of male violence towards women which slides into rape, war and child abuse. What did female non-commentators think? On the eve of the International Conference on Violence, Abuse and Women's Citizenship, the Independent on Sunday commissioned a Mori poll of 772 women. Over half — 51 per cent — said that the allegations of domestic violence should not have stopped Gascoigne being picked for England; 43 per cent said they should. How could this be? Julie Bindel, of Justice for Women, could only conjecture that women — soft, tender-hearted fools! — had been swayed by Gazza's public apology. "I'm surprised and disappointed by the poll," she said. "Women are still too tol-

erant of men's bad behaviour. But you do not have to believe in Panorama's bizarre attempt to portray women as the principal assailants in domestic affray, to accept that domestic violence is more muddled an issue than some women's groups might want to accept. We know that many women are beaten and terrorised by their partners, and deserve much more help than they receive. The continuing shortage of refuges for such women, 25 years since Erin Pizzey launched hers in Chiswick, is lamentable.

But does all domestic violence fit this particular pattern? In a recent Guardian report, members of lesbian couples said that they, too, were victims of domestic abuse. We are regularly informed that domestic violence cuts across classes, with 25 per cent of middle-class sufferers, to 30 per cent of working-class women. Are all these women, many of whom must be capable of supporting themselves, unable to resolve their own domestic problems?

FROM the outside, many couples' relationships seem odd, or imbalanced, or downright nasty, and yet no one interferes. There are women who stay with men who use prostitutes; women who stay to be insulted by idle male parasites; women who stay with men who have sex changes with husbands who acquire a belated appetite for young men, even with men who decide to go into politics. In all such cases, it is accepted that the women, grown-ups, should be allowed to embrace, if they choose, the sources of their grief or discomfort. Similarly, in Gascoigne's case, we must accept that his wife, the independent and

beautiful Sheryl, decided, of her own free will, to marry and reproduce with a reputable and barbarically behaved cat who had spent much of their courtship beating her up and frightening her children. "I'd grab her by the back of the head, pull her hair back and bang her head," Gascoigne divulged in a 1994 confession. "She'd cry out, 'Stop it! Please stop it! I can't take any more.'"

Most of us, I suspect, would have concluded, at length, that this was not Mr Right. Sheryl thought differently. Today, she continues to thwart her supporters, making no public complaint, and inviting no police action. It's baffling and a bit disappointing. It does not mean, however, that Sheryl should be treated like a child, and saved from herself.

Of course, if some campaigners had their way, and society ceased to tolerate all domestic violence, Sheryl would not need to act. Police, doctors and social workers would see to that. Similarly, all those Guardian readers — and there must be at least 25 per cent of them — who are said to be victims of domestic violence, would have to accept that the police might one day come knocking on their doors, and there would be no one to be relieved. Others, like the unfortunate man in the Operation Spanner sado-masochism case, might find that what they find privately bearable, or even desirable, the state deems illegal.

In fact, assaulting anybody is against the law, if there really are women, or men, who do not want to bring the state into their personal relationships, who has the right to force them? Those who say they know better are playing nanny — and everybody knows what bullies they can be.

Meddle with Widmerpool at your peril



David McKie

THE report in the London Evening Standard was thick with unintentional menace. Channel 4, it said, persisting where even back, was at work on the serialisation of Anthony Powell's 12-volume sequence A Dance To The Music Of Time. The project would cost £9 million. Alan Bennett and John Gielgud had been hired, along with a stranger to television, Simon Russell Beale, in the role of Kenneth Widmerpool. The adapter, Hugh Whitmore, planned to be bold. He was carving the novels down to just four instalments; and, because so much of the action in Powell takes place in parties and drawing rooms, was developing on-screen incidents only hinted at in the books. That is where I began to feel queasy. But more ominous still was an observation attributed to Russell Beale. Widmerpool — by far the most dominant character in the story — was based, he'd been told, on Herbert Morrison.

I hope by now someone has disabused him. If he hasn't, this series will prove the biggest disaster since Rhodes. True, Widmerpool becomes a Labour MP, a minister under Attlee, and after he loses his seat in the 1956 election, a Labour life peer; but Morrison he is not, by 1,000 miles. Though perhaps better known nowadays as Peter Mandelson's granddad, Morrison — deputy leader to Attlee, and beaten for the succession by Gaiskell in 1955 — had something of Widmerpool's monstrous will, but there the resemblance ceases. Widmerpool's origins seem humble to those around him at school (which seems to be Eton) but his circumstances are still impossibly grand compared to those of Morrison, one of ten children from Brixton, starting out as a clerk and fighting his way up through local government almost to the top.

You don't get people like Herbert Morrison in Anthony Powell — not major characters, anyway. Apart from the wartime sequences, the working classes scarcely exist — except in minor inventions like Lord Erridge's malevolent butler, Smith, who anyway owes more to Charles Adams than to reality. Thanks to the reasons why some people of taste and discernment recoil from these books with a shudder. Powell, they cry, is a snob (an allegation hard to dispute if one's

read his diaries). He's a social snob, but also a literary snob, far too keen on displaying his deep acquaintance with writers no normal person has read. Does one really want to waste one's time on a world full of aristocratic parties in Eaton Square where everyone seems obsessed with the Hon Frederica Tolland taking up — at her age! — with someone like Dicky Umfraville?

Well, oddly enough, I do. Not for Frederica Tolland and Dicky Umfraville, but for so many others in Powell's abundant gallery: the cheerfully melancholic minor composer Hugh Moreland; his depressive friend the critic MacIntosh and MacIntosh's terminally wife; the eccentric peer Alf Erridge; the appalling, irascible, super-hussy Prunella Fritton, whose excesses make Ferrigno look like Mother Teresa and who (stretching credibility) suddenly marries Widmerpool. They may not be true to life, but they echo life, and the way as one ages one senses the ultimate outcome of people first encountered when young. If some of Powell's characters undergo metamorphosis, so do people in real life too. Who would ever think of the young Bernard Ingham, that staunch Yorkshire socialist colleague of my early days on the Guardian, would have ended his life as a Thatcher truster and a columnist in the righting press?

Which brings us back, as always with The Music of Time, to the metamorphosis of Widmerpool — first seen looming up through the fog on a solitary run on page three of the first of these books, "in a sweater once white and a cap at least a size too small, huddling unevenly, though with determination, on the flat heels of spidged running shoes"; a paradigm, this, of a life which is going wrong. Though perhaps better known nowadays as Peter Mandelson's granddad, Morrison — deputy leader to Attlee, and beaten for the succession by Gaiskell in 1955 — had something of Widmerpool's monstrous will, but there the resemblance ceases. Widmerpool's origins seem humble to those around him at school (which seems to be Eton) but his circumstances are still impossibly grand compared to those of Morrison, one of ten children from Brixton, starting out as a clerk and fighting his way up through local government almost to the top.

BECAUSE Widmerpool is so formidable a creation, there's a danger that television will transform The Music of Time into The Widmerpool Story; adding to all those first-name movies now in our cinemas (Emma, that is, from a work that is basically Ken. As for the model, that is no longer a mystery. People used to believe it was Powell's brother-in-law, Lord Longford, a theory denounced by Powell, who complained that Longford apart from the wartime sequences, the working classes scarcely exist — except in minor inventions like Lord Erridge's malevolent butler, Smith, who anyway owes more to Charles Adams than to reality. Thanks to the reasons why some people of taste and discernment recoil from these books with a shudder. Powell, they cry, is a snob (an allegation hard to dispute if one's



Beatrix Campbell argues that the 48-hour-week row highlights the Government's hypocrisy over 'the family', while below an employer welcomes the plans

Worlds apart

THE POLITICS of time — unlike the politics of pay — reveal an aching power-struggle between men, women and the state which defines not only public but private life. Mr Major's mission to Export the European directive on the 48-hour working week may appease his Euro-zealots, and thus appear to reunite his party. But it will not excite organised employers and workers — it will expose his party once again to the charge that it speaks with forked tongue about family values. This is because working

time is the boundary between private and public life. It is not only about exploitation, but it is also what has made men visitors to the women and children they live with. Resistance to regulation is an alibi. Working time, like waged work itself, has always been the object of state intervention: apart from restraining excessive exploitation, it has shaped the modern templates of masculinity and femininity. That is why regulation of working time is so dangerous. It is about identity; it is about the relations between genders and generations which have exploded afresh

into a fin de siècle moral crusade which masks a problem with no name: the new man reincarnated as a middle-class Andy Capp. The de-regulatory state produced the polarisation between full-time and part-time, waged and unwaged, male and female workers. It was always about power; it produced men as subordinated and women as parents. That process drew an imaginary boundary between public and private which now haunts the world of children. Only she takes care of others as well as herself. Rewarded by rights as well as responsibilities, she should be our role model.

British men work the longest hours in Europe. Longer and longer. But according to the recent Rowntree Foundation research on parenting, British women work the shortest hours and parents have the least access to public childcare. What this tells us is that the most de-regulated society in Europe is the most polarised: far from flexibility encouraging greater domestic democracy, it has re-inforced old identities and atavistic polarisations, both between men and women and between public and private. The row children from Brixton, starting out as a clerk and fighting his way up through local government almost to the top.

A question of decency

Robert Bischof

THE EU's working-time directive is, we hear, going to drive companies' costs up and force some out of business. In fact the so-called "48-hour week" will have little or no impact on all but the most exploitative employers. British business has nothing to fear. The rules in the directive are highly flexible and allow for many exceptions. The Working Time Directive cannot actually stop 48 hours in a week if they agree to do so. Even these rules do not apply to a wide range of jobs, including transport workers, trainee doctors, fishermen, managing executives and family workers. The directive also gives workers other rights: one

day off a week, and a rest break if the working day is longer than six hours. These parts of the plan are also subject to a range of exemptions. Big deal!

Talk of the these rules crippling company profits or costing thousands of jobs is miles from the truth. For most British companies the new rules will make little difference to existing working patterns, and any potential conflicts can be resolved through discussions with employees. At Best, as at the vast majority of now foreign-owned companies in manufacturing and servicing, who are contributing so much to the improvement in Britain's performance, one politely requests one's workforce to do overtime and it has not once been refused. What kind of managers

want to be able to "force" their employees and workers to do overtime anyway? Certainly not the best of British companies. That is not the way to get quality work consistently from your workforce. Additionally, excessive overtime with its 50 per cent cost penalty — is more often than not the result of poor resource planning (in other words, poor management).

ON a normal 36-hour week, the 10 additional hours give managers an extra 26 per cent flexibility to play with. If that is not enough, they should not only politely request it, they should go on a management-training course. We mustn't allow a political row about one decision to obscure the fact that on many occasions in the past

the European Court of Justice has acted to help the interests of British business by opening up new markets, creating more jobs. The European Court pressured the Italians to repeal a new luxury-car tax which excluded Jaguar cars from Italy. The Spanish have been forced to allow the sale of British chewing gum, and the Greeks now allow the sale of British manufactured drinks. The Belgian, Irish and Italian governments now face Court action to open up public-procurement contracts to companies from other countries. The European single market has given British companies equal access to continental markets for the first time. The European Court ensures that single-market rules are implemented even-handedly. Just imagine if we had to rely to domestic courts to implement and enforce EU rules: the result would be chaos, and the eventual break-up of the single market. That really

would cost jobs. I get very annoyed when I hear this constant theme that the minimum wage, the chapter, and now the working-time directive all cost jobs — normally voiced by such "employment-concerned" bodies as the Institute of Directors, or really caring individuals like Sir James Goldsmith on his anti-EU crusade. Jobs get destroyed through financially driven mergers and acquisitions, downsizing, low investment, bad training, the pursuit of short-term-profit goals, high dividend payments and poor management. So my message to the politicians is this: get on with the real business of working with our European partners to extend the single market. By all means help them to avoid excesses, but do not confuse those with the minimum standards of decency in industrial relations.

Robert Bischof is chairman of the manufacturing group Boss

Advertisement for 'Landmark for Ancient Mariners' and 'Spectacle for Modern Travellers' featuring the Sun Temple at Konark in Orissa, India. The text describes the temple's architectural treasures and its location on the North East coast of India. It mentions the temple's 24-wheeled chariot and its proximity to the sun god, Surya. The advertisement also notes that the temple is one of India's best kept secrets and encourages visitors to see it. Contact information for a free brochure is provided: call 0133 211090 or post this coupon to India Tourist Office, 7 Cork Street, London W1K 1LN. There is a form for Name and Address, and the 'india changes you' logo.

10 OBITUARIES

Eddie Harris

In tune with pop and jazz

EDDIE Harris, the saxophonist and composer who has died aged 62, was the kind of jazz musician whose career path involves the cultivation of a thick hide... A fine saxophonist with a broad, soulful tone, sharp originality of line and an irrepressible curiosity about technical development he pioneered various reed trumpets and electric saxes...



Eddie Harris... a serious musician, despite attempts to label him as frivolous

At the height of the swing era, and grew up in the rising years of bebop. He studied the piano as a child, and sang in Baptist church choirs with his cousin. It was as a teenage pianist that he made his first professional appearances...

ways a serious musician inside Harris, and if he appeared to be a frivolous or insubstantial one, it was the unforgiving nature of some sections of the jazz audience that made him so. Irrevocable changes in the post-1970s jazz world have made his point for him.

Fred Lipmann

A watch on the workers

"L'IP, C'EST fini," said Prime Minister Pierre Messmer in 1974, after riot police temporarily halted a staff sit-in at the watch factory in Besançon. But Lip was not really finished until Saturday, when his former managing director, Fred Lipmann, died aged 91...



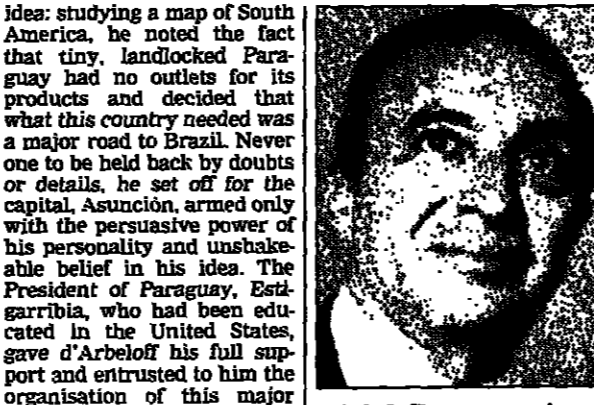
Lipmann... shrine to time

Patents, which limped on until 1984 when bankruptcy struck again. Finally rescued in 1981 by a French precision-tool maker, Lip now has fewer than 200 staff. Had Lipmann bailed out just when the going got rough? Or might the company, had he stayed on, have thrived under his vision and enthusiasm?

Alexander d'Arbeloff

Restless search for the broader horizons

THE LIFE of Alexander d'Arbeloff, who died aged 101, was impressive both for its great length and the astonishing variety of cultural and entrepreneurial projects into which he threw himself...



d'Arbeloff... persuasive

ideas: studying a map of South America, he noted that tiny, landlocked Paraguay had no outlets for its products and decided that what this country needed was a major road to Brazil...

several well known personalities, including Francoise Sagan and Gipsy Rose Lee, though this film was never released. D'Arbeloff also had a lighter side: Reports on Love, a short film he produced combining animation with live action...

Tim Gidal

Visual novella master

TIM GIDAL, who has died aged 87, was one of the last in that generation of photographers who created prose photography's inter-war heyday. Yet it was only in the mid-1970s that he achieved an international reputation...

Germany for Palestine in 1936. He had pursued his disrupted studies in art history and economics from Munich to Berlin and thence to Basel, where he obtained his doctorate in 1935...

interaction or the understanding of the photographer and his subject. And poles apart from the more fashionable conceptual images. At times temperate and irritable, certain of the worth of his own undertakings...

Letter

Professor Graham Owens writes: Your obituary of Bokassa (November 5) might have added that his self-crowning as Emperor (paid for by France) cost up to £20 million. His crown, containing 5,000 jewels, was £2.75 million...

Jackdaw



"COMPUTERS in the future may weigh no more than 1.5 tons." Popular Mechanics, forecasting the relentless march of science, 1949. "I think there is a world market for maybe five computers," Thomas Watson, chairman of IBM, 1943.

vanced Computing Systems Division of IBM, 1968, commenting on the microchip. "There is no reason anyone would want a computer in their home," Ken Olson, president, chairman and founder of Digital Equipment Corp., 1977.

the penis in a paper costume evolved from this sexually enlightened populace. Kokigami originated in 8th century Japan and it has its roots within the art of Tsutsumi, or packaging, which was solely a practice of Japanese aristocrats...

Kokigami ceased to be the exclusive practice of the aristocratic class. Today every social strata of Japanese society partakes in the pleasure of wrapping their "packages" in over 600 types of paper animals, spirits and things.

home, then peters out rapidly during their married life. After 30, posh girl is too embroiled in charities and school runs for sex. Posh girls tend to lack emotion and invention. When it comes to passion, the country posh girls are a bit like their houses. Cold.

seems to have any cash in it - all Daddy's money is tied up in Lloyd's. The ones with the real wedge are the Kensington kittens who cruise Sloane Street in their convertibles...

Simon Mills asks whether the Camillas of the world are really worth it in Elle. HENRY Good, a UK financial printing company, has been writing to customers to offer its services as a top quality business publisher...

Jackdaw wants jewels. E-mail Jackdaw@guardian.co.uk; fax 0171-713 4366; Jackdaw, The Guardian, 119 Farringdon Road, London EC1R 3ER.

Handwritten Arabic text: كوكيغامي

Financial Editor: Alex Brummer
Telephone: 0171-239-9610
Fax: 0171-833-4456

Finance Guardian

PIA critic quits watchdog

Pensions review behind protest

Richard Miles

A DIRECTOR of the Personal Investment Authority yesterday quit unexpectedly in protest at the way the financial services watchdog is handling the review of the pensions mis-selling fiasco. Denis Brown, who has been a PIA director since its formation two years ago, is understood to have resigned because of the regulator's insistence on checking the professional indemnity insurance policies of 3,000 firms of independent financial advisers.

from people who were hoodwinked into leaving company pension schemes for a private plan. The PIA yesterday confirmed Mr Brown's surprise resignation, but denied that the terms of its review — now dragging into its third year — would invalidate a financial adviser's indemnity insurance, which covers the firm against negligence. A spokesman for the PIA said: "The PIA has taken extensive legal advice and doesn't accept that its monitoring arrangements will invalidate professional indemnity insurance." The board will discuss a replacement for Mr Brown when it meets next month. The review of personal pen-

sions mis-selling has been dogged by delays and wrapped in controversy since it was first announced by the Securities and Investments Board, the chief financial regulator, in October 1994. Even though SIB identified a possible 1.5 million cases where investors were given the wrong advice, only a handful of people have so far received compensation. Figures from a leaked PIA document indicate that less than £27 million has been offered in redress. The total bill is estimated at over £2 billion. SIB's chairman, Andrew Large, is today expected to unveil plans to speed up the review process, which has been slowed by a series of court challenges and a number of technical difficulties, as well as the reluctance of occupational pensions to provide information about their former members. The slow progress of the review partly prompted the Office of Fair Trading to institute in September a far reaching inquiry into personal pensions. The bulk of the mis-selling was carried out by the salesmen of life insurance companies and the insurance arms of the banks, while independent financial advisers, who are not tied to any single company, account for no more than a third of the total cases, according to early estimates by SIB. Although the PIA has taken no disciplinary action against

Notebook

Sceptics left in cold over EMU



Edited by Patrick Donovan

A RCH-Euro-sceptic John Redwood may enjoy growing support within the Tory backbench as he won little applause in chilly Harrogate yesterday as he attempted to harangue industrial leaders with his apocalyptic views about the dangers of a single European currency. The widening gulf between the likes of Mr Redwood and the Confederation of British Industry underlines how the Government is in danger of losing the argument over the EMU with the people who really matter — the men and women who actually run the companies which drive the British economy. Of course there are dangers if EU member countries "cheat" over convergence criteria needed to set up a single currency. Obviously, this could lead to huge problems over the medium term Bank of England governor Eddie George, spelled out to the CBI conference yesterday. But listen to the debate carefully and it is clear that Britain's biggest and most powerful companies are far more enthusiastic about the opportunities provided by EMU. Nor did yesterday's controversy over the European Court of Justice's ruling that Britain must accept the restriction of a 48-hour working week appear to kindle controversy. First, the estimated £2 billion-a-year costs of this kind of restriction are not material in the scale of industry's overheads generally. Second, big companies are confident of being able to get around many of the apparent restrictions of the legislation because the definition of what constitutes a working week is so woolly. Yesterday's debate was important because it highlighted the central flaw in most Euro-sceptic's argument against a single European currency — the risk to Britain's sovereignty. Former European Commissioner Peter Sutherland clearly spoke for many when he argued that Britain had already conceded the principle of sovereignty when Mrs Thatcher originally agreed to sign the Single European Act. And without a single currency, in the longer term there will be no Single European Market, he says. We are seeing a very dangerous conflict building up between Government and business over the entire question of EMU. But of course this is far too controversial a subject for any party to address in the politically sensitive run-up to the next election.

So much hot air

B RITISH Gas threatens to sue the government for £1.2 billion, claiming that it has effectively been lumbered with unnecessary tax for North sea oil and gas. Now this acrimonious law suit has been exposed as so much hot air. This is an extraordinary about-turn even for British Gas. A key director of the TransCo pipeline business, Harry Moulson, is leaving on an entirely unrelated matter of ill-health. But are there not other directors and key personnel who should be reconsidering their position. For the collapse of this high profile and doubtless very expensive court case implies a lack of judgement at the very heart of the company. The expectation that British Gas could enjoy lucrative tax refunds in negotiations over contracts with other companies has misled both the City and shareholders. This fruitless battle has undoubtedly diverted management when they should have been concentrating all their energies on the current regulatory row with industry watchdog, Clare Spottiswoode. "Don't you just love being in control," runs the British Gas advertising slogan. The words are beginning to have a hollow ring for shareholders of this extraordinarily accident-prone company.

British Gas drops £1bn legal action against DTI

Chris Barrie
Business Correspondent

B RITISH Gas suffered a double blow yesterday when it was forced to drop a £1.2 billion legal action against the Government and to accept the resignation of a senior executive at its TransCo pipelines business. The decision to halt litigation against the Department of Trade and Industry spells the end of the energy group's hopes of winning hefty rebates on gas levy payments made in the past 10 years. The company startled ministers and the gas industry by issuing writs against the DTI last July, but did not serve them while it considered its position. The writs sought to recover past payments under the Gas Levy Act of 1981 and covered 24 contracts for gas from eight North Sea fields. The DTI responded at the time by issuing parallel writs against 27 oil and gas companies which had sold the gas to British Gas. The DTI withdrew these writs yesterday following the climbdown. Energy minister Lord Fraser of Carmyllie said he was pleased the issue had been put to rest without litigation. Officials indicated that there had been no negotiation with British Gas. One said: "We always said there was nothing wrong with the legislation. Now they have accepted it." While admitting that gas levy legislation had been "applied correctly", British Gas denied that its withdrawal amounted to a climbdown. The company said it had been forced to issue the writs last July to protect any potential claim from being time-barred. Denying that the episode had eaten into government goodwill towards the company, it said it would have been "irresponsible" not to have taken the action which had been in the interests of its shareholders. The issues had been "complex" and had been discussed with the DTI. One major North Sea oil operator dismissed the writs as "a lot of lawyer manoeuvring". British Gas is continuing to talk with North Sea companies on the renegotiation of long-term take-or-pay contracts, declined to discuss progress of the talks yesterday, claiming they were unconnected to the writs. The legal U-turn comes as the managing director of the TransCo pipelines business, resigned due to ill health, Harry Moulson, 52, is on extended sick leave due to dangerously high blood pressure. British Gas said his departure was entirely unconnected to the legal action, which concerned a different part of the group. It added that the loss of Mr Moulson's 30 years of experience would not affect its battle at the Monopolies and Mergers Commission to overturn new price and profits caps. This campaign was being led by deputy chairman Philip Rogerson. Stepping into the breach temporarily will be David Varney, a British Gas executive director, who will run TransCo International, the new group being formed from pipelines and exploration as part of demerger plans.



Files driver... A model puts a spike-proof clubhouse carpet through its paces on the catwalk at the Eurogolf trade exhibition in Birmingham which opened yesterday. The carpet was invented by Gradus of Macclesfield. PHOTOGRAPH BY JOHN POTTER

DTI bars more rogue directors

Nicholas Barnister

A RECORD number of rogue businessmen and women have been disqualified this year from becoming company directors, according to figures yesterday from the Department of Trade and Industry. The number of disqualification orders made during the first nine months of the year rose by 70 per cent to a record 678. Corporate affairs minister John Taylor said there would be no let up in the hunt for directors who had "abused the privilege of limited liability". But critics said more should be done to prevent

people with bad business track records from becoming directors in the first place. CCN Business Information, which last month revealed that one in eight directors had been involved in a series of company failures, said it was too easy for someone to become a director. Jo Howard, managing manager of CCN's business information division, called for tougher rules. "All you have to give is your name, address and the date. So tracking down directors who have done the dirty is very difficult." Mr Taylor added: "There is no closed season for unfit directors, particularly directors of 'phoenix' companies — those who set out the limited company as a way of accumulating debts with no intention of repaying them and who move on to form the next company. In these cases it is often the same premises, the same employees and of course the same directors — the same game in another name." The figures show disqualified directors frequently came from the fashion, security, time-share, entertainment and engineering sectors. More than 3,800 directors have been disqualified since 1985 when the government took new powers to deal with them. But most have only been disqualified for between two and five

Call for Ofgas to sort out chaos

THE Gas Consumers Council is poised to announce sweeping changes to its funding arrangements and has begun a fundamental review of its structure, writes Chris Barrie. The news came as the Council and the Consumers' Association released a survey that shows widespread confusion among the public over the introduction of competition in the domestic gas market. Director Sue Slipman called on Ofgas to educate householders ahead of full competition in 1999. According to the survey, the industry's structure is little understood and too few consumers understand the implications of signing a new contract for gas supply. Arrangements for transferring customers from British Gas to new suppliers in the South-west pilot area had been inadequate. The Council remains under intense pressure to respond to unprecedented levels of complaints about British Gas from the pub-



Ms Slipman said gas industry regulator Clare Spottiswoode had agreed to change the licences awarded to gas companies to allow them to make payments directly to the Council without running foul of Treasury rules. The new licences are now being drafted. It is understood that British Gas is also close to deciding whether to fund a new call centre for the Council. Ms Slipman added that the Council was also "on the threshold" of a review of its organisation which has become an anachronism because it is based on British Gas's regional structure. A more flexible structure is needed, she said.

Ex-Barings executive beats job ban

Roger Cowe

A FORMER senior executive at Barings Bank yesterday succeeded in overturning attempts by regulators to ban him from working in the City. Lawyers for Ron Baker, the former Barings director who as head of financial products oversaw rogue trader Nick Leeson, said last night that the independent tribunal hearing the case had dismissed most of the charges brought by the Securities and Futures Authority. The SFA had claimed that his poor management contributed to Barings' collapse and wanted him banned from

senior management jobs in the City for three years. Mr Baker will now be able to seek another job in the City. Mr Baker said: "It was important to me to fight this case, as I have always known there was nothing in the allegations against me. I am very pleased that an almost every count the tribunal has found in my favour." A spokesman for the SFA refused to comment until the full written judgment is delivered in three weeks' time. Both sides will then have 10 days to appeal against the tribunal finding. Mr Baker had not been accused of dishonesty or being directly involved in the collapse of the bank at the beginning of last year. But the SFA criticised his management of the financial products group which included Leeson's activities in Singapore, which led to the collapse of the merchant bank. The SFA told the tribunal that he had not shown due care and diligence in understanding Leeson's trading business in Singapore, and that he had not ensured proper supervision and control of staff. Ultimately they charged that he was not fit to be a director of the bank. His lawyers said the tribunal found in Mr Baker's favour on all these issues. It found against him over his monitoring of Barings' proprietary trading activities, and issued a reprimand for his failure in this area. It rejected the SFA's demand to expel him from the register, leaving him free to attempt to find another job in the City. Mr Baker will have to pay costs of £7,500, but that is only 5 per cent of the total he might have been left with. Baker's solicitor, Lindsay Hill, said: "I believe he can regard the tribunal's decision as a victory. It leaves the way clear for him to resume his successful career." The other Barings' staff face tribunal hearings in the next couple of months. Five others negotiated settlements with the SFA, including bans of up to three years.

Mortgage jitters

THE spectre of sharply rising mortgage rates has been raised by the Nationwide's decision yesterday to jack up its home-loan rate by a quarter of a percentage point. The move, which comes just days after similar action by the Birmingham Midshires, is bad news for its one million customers. And it has certainly sent the jitters around the financial services sector as Nationwide commands around 8 per cent of the entire British mortgage market. But this does not mean that mortgage rates generally are yet ready to rise off the bottom. The important thing to remember about Nationwide is that its rates were already 0.5 per cent below the rest of the home-loan industry. It has now appeared to accept that this kind of differential is unsustainable over the longer term even though its increase to 8.74 per cent is still more competitive than the industry's average loan rate of 6.99 per cent. It would be more accurate to interpret the move as the abandonment of an overly ambitious marketing move rather than any immediate response to the cost of borrowed money. Nevertheless, any move by a lender as big as Nationwide is bound to focus minds on the prospect of further increases. This will inevitably lead to less generous terms on fixed rate mortgages and other incentive deals. Lenders can just about cope with the recent 0.25 per cent hike in base rates. But any further rise in the cost of borrowed money will make mortgage rate increases inevitable. Any further round of home-loan increases could undermine brittle confidence in the housing market generally. Not to mention the electorally vital economic and social factor in the election run-up.

Disabled dispute threatens building society windfalls

Sarah Ryle

THE Government yesterday threatened to destabilise the whole building society conversion process by rejecting claims from the industry that windfall bonuses cannot be paid directly to disabled account holders. MPs are concerned that disabled people, as well as children and others whose accounts are operated by trustees, will not benefit from bonuses paid when societies are either sold or convert to bank status. Societies have claimed they must pay windfalls to the first name on an account, whether the money belongs to them or not, partly because the law prevents bonuses from being passed directly to the real beneficiary. But social security and disabled people's minister, Alistair Burt, yesterday denied this in Parliament. A Treasury official added: "The societies appear to be giving the impression that paying real beneficiaries would be either impossible or very difficult, but there is nothing at all in legislation to stop them." The Halifax building society said last night "Under the present scheme, separate treatment of disabled savers, on a case by case basis, is not possible. Any such individual decision could give rise to a legal challenge to the entire conversion process. More than a third of the adult UK population now have expectations of significant windfalls in 1997. We sincerely hope that these plans will not be disrupted." A spokeswoman for the Abbey National, one of the societies at the centre of the row after its takeover of N&P, said that it did not discriminate on grounds of "age, sex, race, religion or state of health."

TOURIST RATES — BANK SELLS

Australia 2.034	France 8.09	Italy 2.446	Singapore 2.26
Austria 18.86	Germany 2.2975	Malta 0.57	South Africa 7.57
Belgium 42.32	Greece 38.00	Netherlands 2.89	Spain 202.00
Canada 2.15	Hong Kong 12.47	New Zealand 2.27	Sweden 10.72
Cyprus 0.73	India 58.85	Norway 10.12	Switzerland 2.91
Denmark 9.25	Ireland 0.2675	Portugal 244.00	Turkey 158.842
Finland 7.29	Israel 1.33	Saudi Arabia 9.16	USA 1.6170

Supplied by NatWest Bank (excluding Indian rupee and Israeli shekel).



The three Es — Europe, economy and election — dominate debate as business backs single currency

Malcolm Rifkind attempts to paper over cracks in the Tories position on Europe during a speech to the CBI conference yesterday



George derides 'EMU dash'

Simon Beavis and Larry Elliott

GROWING business support for Britain to join a single currency was tempered yesterday when the Governor of the Bank of England, Eddie George, attacked the "hectic" dash for monetary union and warned that some member states were taking "artificial stimulants" to meet the 1999 starting date.

But his strongly sceptical stance was later amplified by leading Tory Euro-sceptic, John Redwood — who was given short shrift by delegates to the CBI conference in Harrogate, with many delegates calling for greater political leadership on the issue and less funding.

The governor warned the conference that there were risks that monetary union might be too expansionary for some countries and too deflationary for others.

Mr George said the convergence criteria in the Maastricht treaty had been designed to limit the risks of divergent economic performance across the European Union. "I doubt whether the architects of the treaty envisaged the present hectic dash for the line... and I doubt whether they envisaged that

Rifkind vs Redwood

THE FOREIGN Secretary, Malcolm Rifkind, yesterday tried to keep the lid on Conservative divisions over Europe in the face of one of the fiercest attacks yet on the single currency from former leadership challenger John Redwood, writes Richard Thomas and Simon Beavis.

Mr Redwood told the CBI a single currency would cause widespread economic damage and attacked the political ambitions of German leader Helmut Kohl. "Chancellor Kohl wants to build a country called Europe, governed from a city called Brussels, with its economy directed from a bank in Frankfurt," he said.

Asked if he agreed, Mr Rifkind admitted that there were differences of opinion with the German government, but said Mr Kohl's objectives were honourable. "It is not the language I would have chosen," he said.

In a nod to the party's Euro-sceptic wing, he stressed that the option of a single currency remained open and he cast doubt over whether the first wave of countries would be able to form a monetary union in 1999.

Refusing to be drawn on whether Britain should sign up, Mr Rifkind said that an active role in Europe was one of the four pillars of UK foreign policy.

Mr Redwood criticised the whole EMU project as disastrous for British business. "Joining a single currency is like being in the ERM, but throwing away the key having locked the door. We would never get out again."

Clarke's loan rate policy rejected

THE CBI yesterday called on the Chancellor to use his Budget rather than interest rates to clamp down on consumer spending.

Business leaders said Kenneth Clarke's increase in base rates had been unnecessary, and further rises in sterling triggered by the higher rates would threaten exports and industry generally.

Andrew Buxton, chairman of Barclays Bank and of the CBI's Economic Situation Committee, said: "The recent interest rate rise was not necessary now."

He accepted it was right for the Government to act early against inflation, but argued that the surge in sterling had compounded exporters' problems of weak demand in

Europe

"We should not rush into interest rate rises without thinking of our exporters."

Mr Buxton said the main problem facing the economy was not inflation but high public borrowing, and called for a "Boring Budget" that would tighten fiscal policy.

However, the Bank of England governor, Eddie George, told the conference: "It may well be that some further rise will become necessary in due course — and that was the conclusion in our latest inflation report."

He rejected the view that the rise in sterling meant higher base rates were not needed to cool down the economy. "The stronger exchange rate does nothing directly to restrain the domestically driven upswing in demand."

Adair Turner, the CBI's director general, said the rise in base rates had increased since the CBI launched its Budget submission two months ago.

"We are concerned about relying on interest rates as a counter-inflationary mechanism. It feeds through into the exchange rate and the competitiveness of industry."

Alastair Eperon, chairman of the CBI's distributive trades panel, said there was no overwhelming demand for tax cuts, saying the electorate was too cynical to see them as anything other than a bribe.

Allied Domecq finds breaking up is hard to do

OUTLOOK/ Dispirited drinks group finds demerger too costly, writes Roger Cowe

APOTENTIAL bill of £200 million was one of the main reasons Allied Domecq rejected pleas from the City to split up its spirits and retailing businesses.

Chairman Sir Christopher Hogg said yesterday — as he announced disappointing results for the year to August — that the board had decided demerger was not the answer to improving shareholder value. It would concentrate on improving the existing businesses, although breaking up might return as an option in a few years' time.

Investors' expectations of a demerger were heightened earlier this year when Sir Christopher took the chair, because of his record in splitting up Courtauld in 1995. He admitted yesterday that had been a "seductive option" because of investor pressure.

But, on top of the huge cost, the board had decided it could not afford top management attention being distracted for up to a year from the key problem of turning around the operations.

He pointed out that there was more synergy between the two businesses than had generally been assumed, especially the financial benefits of carrying the overseas earnings and the cash flow of the spirits business with the cash-hungry UK pub operation.

Sir Christopher made it

clear that Allied's businesses were not fit to stand on their own as independent quoted companies. He said it had taken five years to get Courtauld Textiles into a fit state to be spun off.

It has already taken longer than that to sort out the accident-prone Allied, which has had a miserable 1990s after a disappointing and confused 1970s and 1980s. Sir Christopher remarked that the group had been in a state of flux since the 1960 merger that created the group. Since then Lyons has come and gone, as has Carlsberg, and the company — which was one of the big four brewers — now makes beer only in the cellars of its Firkin pub chain.

The exit from brewing explains the depth of the plunge in profits, which exaggerates the poor operating performance. Allied sold its interest in the Carlsberg-Tetley joint venture for £205 million, but incurred a total loss on the deal of £309 million. The monopolies authorities are still debating the implications of the deal for Bass, which is buying the stake.

Whatever happens, Allied is shot of the brewing mill. As it knows its pubs will not have to pay excessive beer prices once the existing supply agreement runs out at the end of next year.

Even allowing for these exceptional costs, however, Allied's rest of the year profits were down by 11 per cent, with a small increase in retailing offset by a plunge in spirits profits from £488 million to £410 million.

That is mainly the consequence of massive destocking. Allied decided last year, in common with its competitors, that it had been showing out of cases of Ballantine's, Kahlua and the like that were just sitting in distributors' warehouses. The answer was to ship less booze, which therefore hit sales and profits.

So the business is now leaner — 1,500 people have been made redundant — but it remains to be seen just how much fatter the spirits business has lost the gitter it had when it seemed possible to keep pushing up profit margins to compensate for low sales growth — although Mr Hales insisted that spirits remain attractive as a high-margin, brand-led, cash-generative business. Perhaps one day it will be attractive enough to stand on its own, but not for a year or two.



£5bn insurance merger

Richard Miles

CONSOLIDATION in the life insurance industry intensified yesterday when France's largest insurers, Axa and Unieff Assurances de Paris, revealed merger plans in a £5.6bn share swap.

The combined group, whose name has yet to be decided, will have £445 billion (£280 billion) under management, and will rank second in the world behind Japan's Nippon Life Insurance.

The deal will drive together two of the biggest life insurers in Britain.

The announcement took the industry by surprise. The

companies said in a statement that the merger would enable Axa and UAP, privatised in 1994, to build a group with an unparalleled strategic position "in the face of increasingly stiff global competition".

Axa's chairman, Claude Bebear, who will head the management board of the group, said the partnership would create significant economies of scale and make possible the streamlining of a number of operations, including asset management. But he insisted there would be no job losses at either company. UAP employs 18,000, while Axa has a workforce of 10,000 worldwide.

The two companies said it was too soon to say how the merger would affect the UK subsidiaries, but executives from both sides are meeting

Jobs go in Norweb deal

Celia Weston Industrial Correspondent

UNIONS fear up to 1,000 jobs will be lost following yesterday's announcement that United Utilities is to sell Norweb Retail to rival high-street electrical chain Comet.

United announced earlier this year it wanted to sell the loss-making operation.

The move is the latest in a series of closures and mergers in electrical retailing, caused by poor demand, cut-throat competition and, mergers and acquisitions across the utilities sector.

Under the terms of the proposed sale, Comet, which is owned by Kingfisher, will pay £51 million in cash, less a deduction of

£22 million to reflect restructuring costs.

Norweb Retail, which operates mainly in the north-west of England, has 81 out-of-town stores, 87 high street sites and annual sales of £280 million.

Comet said Norweb's out-of-town stores would be integrated into the Comet chain early next year. Norweb's withdrawal from high-street operations would continue. Comet said it would decide in February which stores to close.

The trade union Unison said that this could mean 1,000 job losses among the 2,800 staff employed in the stores, at Norweb Retail's Bolton head office, and a distribution centre in Manchester, both of which would be closed. The job

News in brief

Water cut-offs continue to dry up

THE number of households being disconnected for non-payment of water bills is continuing to fall, according to new figures from industry watchdog Ofwat. Disconnections fell 21 per cent to 1,974 in the six months to September, the lowest first half figure since Ofwat started keeping records in 1990.

Ofwat said its guidelines on debt and disconnection had now been adopted by the whole industry, but it pointed out that two water supply companies, Mid Kent and Portsmouth, still had relatively high disconnection rates. Mid Kent, the managing director of Mid Kent, said 90 per cent of those disconnected were reconnected within 24 hours. — Nicholas Bamister

Clubhaus tees up Gold Fund

CLUBHAUS, the European golf club operator, yesterday unveiled a £12.7 million deal to acquire Gold Fund, owner of two Midlands golf courses.

The all-shares offer, which carries a cash-and-shares alternative valuation of £12 million, caps a period of rapid expansion for Clubhaus since it was demerged from Ex-Lands Group in February and listed on the stock market. The shares closed unchanged at 82½p. — Dominic Walsh

Construction booster

CONSTRUCTION firms received a sharp boost to orders as manufacturers increased expansion plans and the housing market recovery led through the system, latest official figures showed yesterday. Orders were especially high in the infrastructure sector, while private sector housing increased for the third quarter in a row and helped boost the overall value of new work to more than £2.8 billion in September.

New construction work in the three months to September was worth £5.4 billion, the Department of the Environment said, 10 per cent higher than at the same time last year. House building in the private sector was 7 per cent higher in the third quarter than it was a year ago. — Sarah Ryle

Colonial bonanza

SOME 270,000 British investors with Colonial, the Australian mutual financial services group, are to receive shares worth at least £285, after its members voted yesterday to support its conversion plans. Colonial won 97 per cent approval from voting members in four countries, including New Zealand and Fiji, clearing the way for a stock market flotation in Australia next summer with a capitalisation of A\$1.65 billion (£790 million).

But despite holding 55 per cent of its A\$36 billion assets in the UK, Colonial said yesterday it remained undecided about seeking a second listing on the London Stock Exchange. — Richard Miles

Good causes lift profits

SUPPORTING good causes is good for profits, according to research for Business in the Community (BITC), published yesterday to support a new initiative on cause-related marketing led by Cadbury Schweppes chairman Dominic Cadbury.

More than four out of five consumers said that the price and quality of products was the same, they prefer a product associated with a good cause. — Roger Cowe



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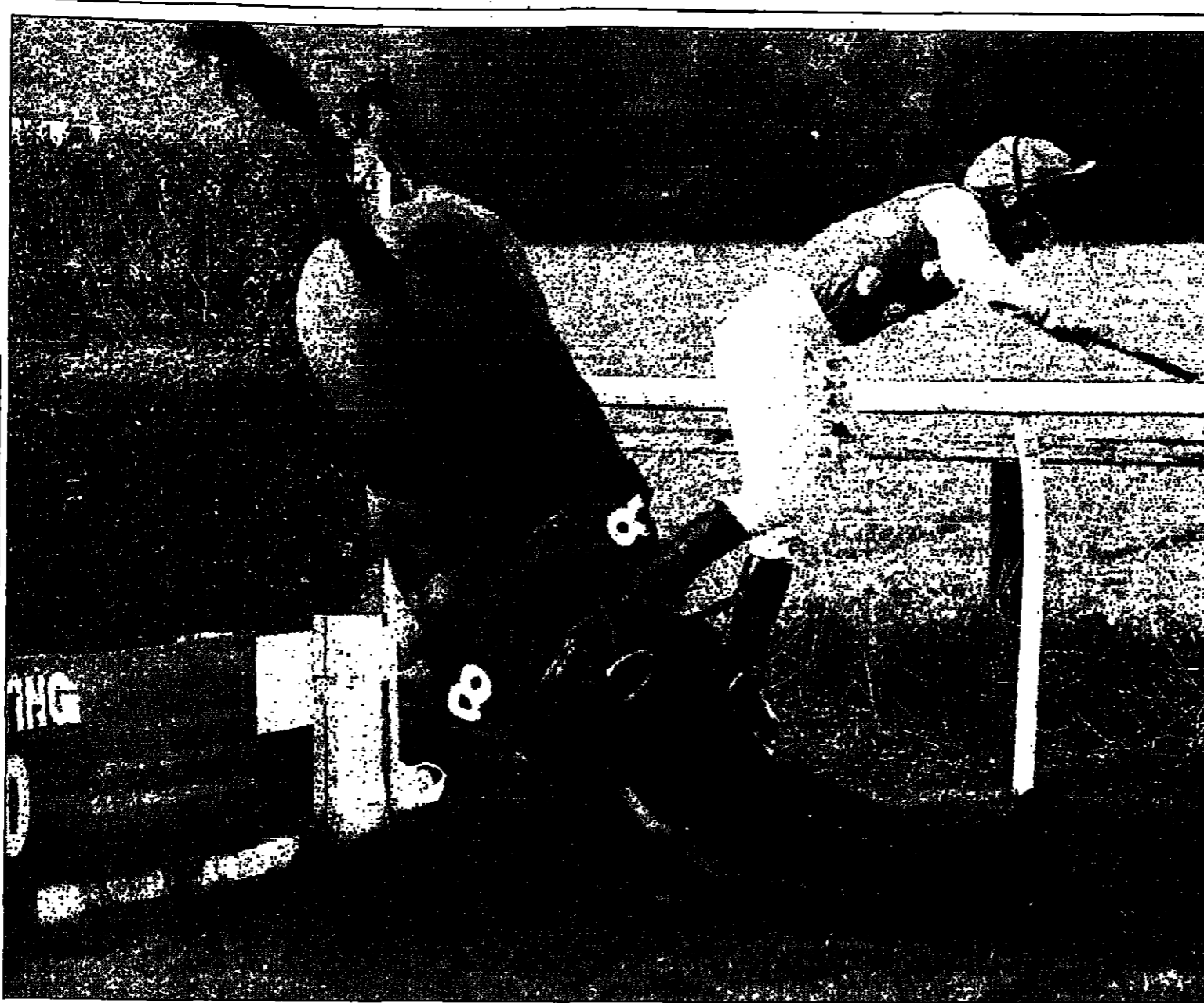
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طريق من الامم

Racing Gale to repeat chasing promise

Ken Oliver

FOLLOWERS of trainers and jockeys statistics will be interested in the proceedings at this afternoon's meeting at Worcester where David Gandolfo, the Wantage trainer, has booked Richard Dunwoody for three races.



Over and out... David Walsh parts company from his mount Circulation at Sedgfield yesterday

today's course last month when he beat Mythical Approach by two lengths and another open for further improvement.

Ivy House, five times a winner over hurdles, gained a long overdue first victory over fences in the Dick Brewitt-Mann Handicap Chase at Sedgfield.

following at Sedgfield, where Handed was three lengths clear when unseating his rider three from home, leaving Cader Idris to come home unchallenged.

Hellenis Novice Chase. High Handed was three lengths clear when unseating his rider three from home, leaving Cader Idris to come home unchallenged.

But Worcester denied that the move constituted sacking Johnson, and yesterday Noel Chance, Mr Mulligan's trainer, confirmed: "It was a storm in a tea cup and it has all been sorted out now."

Ferrari break off talks with Sauber

FERRARI have withdrawn from talks with Sauber about supplying engine technology to the Swiss-based Formula One team because details were leaked to the press.

Bradbury takes a break

JULIE BRADBURY, England's outstanding woman badminton player for three seasons, seems unlikely to play at the highest level again, writes Richard Jago.

McRae receives his MBE

COLIN McRAE, the former world rally champion, yesterday received his MBE from the Queen. It was awarded to him in June in recognition of his services to motor sport and the 28-year-old Scot said yesterday: "It is such an honour to receive this award and a great way to end the year. It is very encouraging to know that rallying has been recognised in this way."

Man killed in big-fight row

HOWARD GOMES, aged 42, died in hospital from a gunshot wound to the chest received when he tried to calm his son, Keith Lewis, after Mike Tyson lost his world heavyweight boxing title to Evander Holyfield. Police in Colorado Springs said arrested Lewis, aged 21, in a motel.

Bath to tour South Africa

BATH are planning a two-match tour of South Africa next summer. They hope to play Natal in Durban and Western Province in Cape Town, the scene of England's World Cup semi-final defeat by New Zealand last year.

Humphries on the charge

STAN HUMPHRIES threw three touchdown passes, including one of 46 yards to Andre Coleman in the first half, as San Diego Chargers beat the Detroit Lions 27-21 on Monday night.

Newbury with guide to recent form

Table of racing results for Newbury, including race numbers, names, and winners.

Worcester Jackpot card

Table of racing results for Worcester, including race numbers, names, and winners.

Kelso runners and riders

Table of racing results for Kelso, including race numbers, names, and winners.

Results

Summary table of racing results from various tracks.

RACELINE advertisement featuring a grid of numbers and text for racing enthusiasts.

Soccer

Coca-Cola Cup, third-round replay
Lincoln City 1, Southampton 3

Saints hit back late and hard

David Hopps

Lincoln produced a night of daring-do, as their manager John Beck had promised, but the Third Division side finally had to concede second-best to increasingly redoubtable opponents. Many Premiership sides might have foundered last night against Lincoln's direct style but Southampton, after equalising only 15 minutes from time through Jon Magilton's penalty, then confirmed their superiority with two further goals. They took the lead five minutes from time when Gordon Watson, a substitute for Matthew Tisserier, scored from Eyal Berkovic's right-wing cross, before the Israeli added a third in the last minute.

worth as Fleming launched another bomb, and added to his bruises by saving courageously at Bos's feet. Southampton's quality became more evident as the half progressed, Ostenstad and Berkovic drawing saves from Richardson and Dodd shooting high from 20 yards. But the most galling miss came from Le Tissier, who wasted an indirect free-kick from nine yards after Richardson had been penalised for picking up a back-pass. Le Tissier almost redressed matters just before the hour with a clinical, curling free-kick from 30 yards which seemed to be squeezing into Richardson's top left-hand corner until the goalkeeper produced another outstanding save. But Lincoln had already underlined that, if composure had long since deserted them, the freshies remained well within their capabilities. Fleming's punt forward fell fortuitously for Ainsworth but his snatched volley flew high. Perhaps Southampton's manager Graeme Souness calculated that it was just not Le Tissier's night. His decision to replace the England man 25 minutes from time with the more direct style of Watson brought derisive chants from the home crowd, but after 75 minutes Southampton equalised when Ostenstad was tripped by Barnett and Magilton struck the penalty kick into the roof of the net.

Woods, back in his native Lincolnshire, then tipped over Bos's header and his sides caused a stir. Lincoln had done precisely that in a 4-1 win against Manchester City in the previous round at Sincil Bank, and they began as if convinced of a repeat.

Coca-Cola Cup: Arsenal v Stoke City

Wright enters French spirit

IAN WRIGHT is learning French to help him stay on the same wavelength as Arsenal's inspirational midfielder Patrick Vieira.

match press conference at the training ground. His assistant manager Pat Rice revealed that the Gunners are almost certain to be unchanged tonight. Holland's hat-trick specialist, Dennis Bergkamp, Wales's John Hartson and the England players Tony Adams, David Seaman, David Platt and Wright all returned unscathed from World Cup duty.

Vieira, who was actually born in Senegal, has been given the nickname "What" by the Arsenal players. It is his usual reply to their questions as he struggles to learn the English language.

Paul Merson, who was a late withdrawal from England's trip to Georgia because of a groin injury, is back in training again. Hartson could be on the bench alongside the defender Steve Morrow, who played a leading role in Northern Ireland's 1-1 draw in Germany on Saturday.

Wright said: "He's trying, but I thought I would have to go at picking up a few French phrases from him at the same time. It can only help our understanding."

Wright admitted that Arsenal face a tough task if they are to knock out First Division Stoke, who were good value for the 1-1 draw at the Victoria Ground three weeks ago.

Wright has no language barrier with Arsenal's manager Arsene Wenger who speaks perfect English. But the former Monaco and Grampus Eight coach has imposed a temporary gag on himself as far as the media are concerned.

Mike Sheron, whose goal post Stoke ahead, is ready for another solo mission as a lone striker in front of a five-man midfield.

Wenger is still fuming over last week's rumour that he was about to quit Highbury after only after six weeks in charge. He believes that unfounded speculation about his private life has damaged his reputation, and yesterday he refused to hold his usual pre-

Emerson's outburst last week, in which he allegedly threatened not to return from Brazil, came after Barcelona's expression of interest in the player, who joined Middlesbrough for £4 million less than six months ago.

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A Middlesbrough insider said last night: "The club is ready to take a position which may be necessary. Emerson will be told that he has to play for this club or his contract will be suspended. If



Shouting the odds... they will be against Colin Addison's side at Leyton Orient on Saturday, but he expects his players to express themselves in London PHOTOGRAPH: DAN SMITH

Addison a Martyr to the cause

FA CUP PROFILE: David Foot on the Merthyr manager hoping to live up to his reputation as a creator of giantkilling surprises

THERE are managers who, when they have been fired a few times by unfeeling directors, become convinced of the game that has been their living, and are never heard of again. Not so Colin Addison: he keeps coming back.

In the past 10 years he has managed and coached four Spanish clubs, including Atletico Madrid. He has also been in charge at Hereford United, Newport County, Derby County and West Bromwich Albion and has had coaching jobs in Kuwait and Qatar.

At the moment he rather modestly looks after Merthyr Tydfil, who travel to Leyton Orient on Saturday in the FA Cup. Throughout his eventful managerial career he has demonstrated a rare facility for adjustment, something he originally revealed when he went from playing in the First Division to being player-manager of the then non-League Hereford.

One official said yesterday: "We really are more professional under Colin than we've ever been. He's involved in every facet of the club and his skills at motivation are quite a revelation." Experienced members of the side, such as the former Hereford defender Greg Downs and the Swansea and Sunderland midfielder Colin Pascoe, confirm this.

Addison makes the hour-long journey from his Hereford home at least twice a week to supervise training and keep an eye on the way things are run at Penydarren Park. At 56 he appears to have lost neither his fitness nor his enthusiasm and he works without a contract.

Addison, the son of a bomber pilot, was born in Taunton and brought up just outside Bristol. Rovers gave him a trial but the family had moved north and he signed for York City. He went on to play for Nottingham Forest, Arsenal — he was one of Bertie Mee's first signings along with George Graham — and Sheffield United.

Merthyr, with their 16 part-time professionals and home gates of around 750, are in transition, with Ken Gunter, a one-time police officer who recently retired from his own security firm, heading a takeover. Six hundred fans will be going to London on Saturday to cheer on the Martyrs.

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Emerson faces Boro grilling

John Wardle

he doesn't play for Middlesbrough he will be left to rot."

fulfill the terms of their contracts now."

MIDDLESBROUGH hope today to resolve their problems with the Brazilian midfielder Emerson, who is expected back on Teesside at lunchtime despite reportedly threatening never to play for the club again.

Emerson was originally expected back yesterday. But Middlesbrough played down fears that he would not return, saying last night: "We expect Emerson tomorrow afternoon. The player's interpreter Gianni Paladini went further. "He is coming back. Emerson is happy to stay at Middlesbrough."

Emerson is banned for the next three Premiership games and Middlesbrough will be eager to bring him back for the Coca-Cola Cup derby with Newcastle on November 27.

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First Division: Barnsley 3, Norwich City 1

Moses strikes to start the parting of Norwich's defence

Paul Fitzpatrick

He was picked perfectly by Hendrie, far out on the right. But he placed his header wide of the far post when it was much easier to score. Wilkinson held his head in embarrassment.

Norwich threatened to make Barnsley regret these misses and Adams twice went close, just failing to get full power as he moved on to a cross from the left and then bringing Watson to his first serious save of the half.

This bungled opportunity was possibly still playing on Wilkinson's mind when he optimistically attempted to beat Gunn from a ridiculous distance 10 minutes later. Goalkeepers with Gunn's experience do not fall for those.

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Wilkinson's miss must have nagged at his side throughout the half, but Hendrie should also have done

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Results

Soccer COCA-COLA CUP Third-round replay Lincoln 1 Southampton 3

NATIONWIDE LEAGUE First Division Barnsley 3 Norwich 1

Second Division Shrewsbury 11 Brentford 2

SCOTTISH LEAGUE First Division Dundee United 1 Aberdeen 2

Second Division Dundee 1 Aberdeen 2

RUSSIAN LEAGUE Premier Division Arsenal 1 Chelsea 0

Second Division Arsenal 1 Chelsea 0

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Second Division Arsenal 1 Chelsea 0

Evans decides to take no action over Collymore's 'petulance'

Ian Ross

that they remain keen to sign Chelsea's forward Mark Hughes. The Burnden Park manager Colin Todd said: "We inquired about him in the summer only to be told he wasn't available. If and when that changes we would be interested."

STAN COLLYMORE will not be disciplined by Liverpool for an alleged dip of petulance during a reserves game last weekend.

Collymore appeared to shout obscenities at journalists during the Pontius League fixture against Sheffield Wednesday at Anfield after scoring the first of two goals in his club's 4-0 victory.

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Handwritten text in Arabic script at the bottom of the page.

SportsGuardian

BETTING

This man thought he had won £259,200. The bookies said no. Yesterday it was left to a paper to arbitrate. The Sporting Life sided with Coral

Luke Harding on the bet of a lifetime that may soon see Coral in court

IN A dimly lit casino in Cardiff, Terry O'Callaghan waited to see the result of his home-town team Barry's Uefa Cup match in Aberdeen. That afternoon he had placed £50 in accumulator bets with Coral on the result of four football games. With Barry's 2-1 defeat, he got them all right. Still reeling from his good fortune, he celebrated with champagne as the casino manager totted up his winnings on a calculator. They came to £259,200. It was or so he thought, the 'bet of a lifetime'. But yesterday an independent panel ruled in favour of the High Street betting chain, which had refused to pay out. The manager of the shop in Hayes, Cardiff, where the bet was placed on September 10, had failed to photograph the betting slip when it was handed over the counter, normally a routine procedure in betting shops across Britain. Coral consequently decided the wager was null and void and curtly informed the 62-year-old O'Callaghan by letter he was not going to be paid. O'Callaghan, a watercolour artist, appealed to the time-honoured Green Seal Service run by the Sporting Life newspaper, and even enlisted the support of 31 MPs who put down an early-day motion urging Coral to pay up. But yesterday the quasi-judicial Green Seal panel, which traditionally arbitrates in disputes between dis-



Today a worthless slip of paper... Cardiff punter Terry O'Callaghan displays the £259,200 correct-score betting coupon that Coral has declared void

puted punters and the betting powers-that-be, ruled in favour of Coral. "I'm absolutely devastated," said O'Callaghan yesterday. "There is no natural justice. The manager messed the bet up." He added: "When I won, it was tremendous. We had had to go into Cardiff and were in a casino when we got the results at 10.45pm. The manager came over with champagne. It was the bet of a lifetime. They don't come often."

But, while O'Callaghan was calling for what he sees as natural justice, the Green Seal panel upheld Coral's right to declare the bet void in strict accordance with the bookmakers' rules. The decision said: "The failure of a member of staff to pass the coupon through the security camera and to notify the bet to the monitoring shop were breaches of company procedures which the company could not have prevented. It is therefore the panel's view that Coral... cannot reasonably be held responsible for them. O'Callaghan, who describes himself as a 'substantial, regular punter', is taking legal

advice. He is expected to sue Coral and pursue his claim through the courts. The betting-shop manager at the centre of the affair, Ron Chivers, is off work with stress. Coral's spokesman Malcolm Palmer said last night: "We are obviously encouraged that the Sporting Life has recognised we were right to declare this bet void." The punter had placed two £25 correct-score accumulator bets. In one bet he forecast that Aberdeen would beat Barry 2-1 and Newcastle beat Halmstad 4-0, both Uefa Cup matches, with Colchester defeating Brighton 2-0 and Scarborough edging Doncaster 2-1. They all did. It is general practice among bookmakers to treat bets which have not been photographed as void unless there are good reasons for regarding them as bona fide. Bookmakers regard the camera film as an essential element of their security system and guarantees a betting slip has not been completed after an event has taken place.

Labour's Tony Banks, who signed the early-day motion, said: "Coral are bad losers and I think people who place bets should remember this."

Strange facts of sporting life

Graham Rock explains why a newspaper panel is the punter's last court of appeal

PUNTERS and bookmakers in dispute over bets not involving horse racing have no alternative but to rely on arbitration because, for a century and a half, gambling debts have not been recoverable under British law.

The Gaming Act of 1842 made all contracts by way of wagering null and void. Before then wagers of £10 or more were enforceable. At that time—and indeed until 1994—the Jockey Club ran racing. Behind the scenes, friends of the club lobbied Westminster and the 1842 Act was passed retroactively to head off a total of 68 legal actions which could have cost club members a potential £500,000.

In the following year a Charles Russell was

warned off by the Jockey Club but fought back, producing a list of 30 defaulters, the majority being club members. Russell, victim of an attempt to clean up racing, then went to the courts to embarrass those who had punished him. He sued Lord George Bentinck, the club's senior steward, for £12,000 at the Galkford Assize.

The present Government has made it clear that it does not intend to change the law, and attempts by lobby groups representing punters have not got off the ground. Prospective clients must provide detailed proof of their ability to meet an agreed credit limit, while the spread-betting bookmakers are required to lodge a significant proportion of their potential losses with a central body.

Horse racing disputes are settled by Tattersalls' Committee, which is funded by the British Horseracing Board but reports to the Jockey Club. The members

adjudicate both on disagreements between backer and layer on the nature or size of a bet struck, and on those cases in which one or other of the parties has not settled to the satisfaction of the other.

Those ordered to settle have the right to appeal the Jockey Club, but if they lose and fail to meet their obligations within a designated period they are "warned off" and banned from British racecourses.

Given the long history of being, bookmakers are aware of the inevitability of bad debts and all budgets are constructed in the knowledge that about 10 per cent of net profit will be forfeited to defaulters.

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Players with the right stuff for power



Jim White

PRIME Minister Imran: it has a ring to it. Almost as much as First Lady Jemima. After four years pretending he wasn't interested, was just keen to do his bit for charity, build his hospital and joust with oils in the High Court, last week Imran Khan finally, publicly, admitted he wants to be leader of Pakistan. In a flurry of cricketer metaphors, he has pitched himself into the sticky wicket of electioneering, running in with an anti-corruption action, which, Shane Warne and his mates in the Australian cricket squad would be quick to point out, for the average Pakistani captain at first glance is not unlike Gazza campaigning on the battered wives ticket.

But this is the point. Imran is renowned in his homeland for succeeding at the one task reckoned there to be impossible. In 1992 he turned a bunch of in-fighting, self-absorbed prima donnas who comprised the Pakistan cricket team, some of whom were suspected by many of their supporters not to be making a sufficient effort in certain matches because it might interfere with their personal betting portfolios, into a side that won the cricket World Cup.

He took on the sparring factions and made them not just work together but beat the rest of the world, a piece of shrewd diplomacy Boutros Boutros Ghali would kill to achieve. If he could do that with Javed and the lads, Imran wants the voters to believe, leading the country would be as easy as bowling to John Major in a charity game.

As an idea, Imran's is not as preposterous as it sounds. Why should a man who has triumphed so conspicuously in international sport be any less qualified for the highest office than someone who has succeeded in business, say, the law, or in Pakistan's case, the army? Why might he not transfer his skills? As a cricket captain Imran was dynamic, imaginative and above all clear: all the prerequisites his country searches for in a leader after the Benazir years. Indeed Imran is not the only aspirant politician reminding the voters of his past as a

sporting hero these past few weeks. In the US elections Jack Kemp, Senator Dole's running mate, playing a long game for the year 2000, spent the latter stages of the campaign distancing himself from his senior partner and planting the idea that having once been a quarterback in the public eye and one who qualifies him for the White House next time round; after all, as a means of raising a country's self-esteem, being good at games is more significant than being a canny negotiator in the public spending round.

Which makes you think: if sports hero as candidate is that good a political marketing concept, who in this country might be groomed for the transition from playing field to Parliament? We have some limited precedent here: Christopher Chataway and Seb Coe both ran themselves into Westminster. And, though it is debatable whether having once sat at the back of a boat while eight blokes sweated themselves into an early grave strictly qualifies him as a sportsman, Colin Moynihan even steered himself towards a ministerial portfolio.

These, however, were not men touched with sufficient affection in the public heart to make high office.

BUT what an election-winning Cabinet could be constructed from former British sporting heroes: Lester Piggott at the Treasury, half the Arsenal squad at the Ministry of Health, preaching the benefits of abstinence, Jack Charlton at Agriculture leading our negotiating team at the Common Fisheries summit, Nigel Benn, a battered national monument in urgent need of patching up, would be at home at the Heritage department, Vinnie Jones could sort out the affairs of the Home Office, and, particularly if Imran gets voted in, it would give up Commonwealth Conferences too to appoint Ian Botham Foreign Secretary.

Prime Minister would be a trickier position to fill, however. The Imran model would presuppose a world champion, which, in Britain's case, narrows the choice down to a couple of small bores and a coxless pair. But if we widen the net to those connected with sport who quickened the national pulse, lifted the collective chin and put a patriotic spirit in the step even if, ultimately, it ended in tears, then the field is clear. Step forward, in the first dual leadership of the country since William and Mary, David Baddiel and Frank Skinner.

Home win marks new Henman work ethic

Stephen Barley in Telford

THE Tim Henman roadshow, otherwise known as the Guardian Direct National, opened in Telford yesterday with Britain's No. 1, after three successive first-round international defeats, rediscovering the road to success on the home front. "Very nice to win again," he observed without too much excitement. Henman, having reached the quarter-finals at Wimbledon and risen to a high of No. 25 in the world rankings recently, had lost to Stefan Edberg of Sweden, Spain's Carlos Moya and Zimbabwe's Byron Black in quick succession at ATP tournaments over the past month.

Berkshire's Greg Saffery, a qualifier, mustered as much resistance as possible, managed one break of serve in the second set when Henman was leading 3-0, and was finally beaten 6-1, 6-2 in 50 unremarkable minutes.

With both Henman and Greg Rusedski, who will begin his challenge today, in the world's top 50 the Nationals almost strutted on to its Shropshire stage this year. The Industrial Revolution had its roots in nearby Ironbridge and the success of Henman, in particular has set in motion a feeling of imminent progress and change within the British game. Jeremy Bates, who for a decade carried the cross of domestic expectations, will assume responsibility for men's

national training next year and yesterday signalled his hope of taking the country's best young players to a training camp in Florida where they would get the chance to play against Henman and Rusedski.

"When I was young I played a lot against Jeremy and you learn there is no magical secret to success, you just have to work hard," said Henman, who admitted that his recent defeats were probably the result of insufficient fitness and stamina.

He has reached six semi-finals this year and knows he has to train harder and more consistently. His coach, David Felgate, who has relinquished certain LTA involvements to be with Henman at the major tournaments, will make sure

a daily routine is pursued with vigour. The British No. 1 also intends playing more doubles next year and is currently negotiating to partner Holland's Jan Siemerink.

The optimism that has risen within the men's game is considerably less apparent on the women's side of the net. Britain has no one in the world top 100 and yesterday the No. 1 seed, Sam Smith, struggled to beat the Kent teenager Abigail Torold 2-6, 7-5, 6-3.

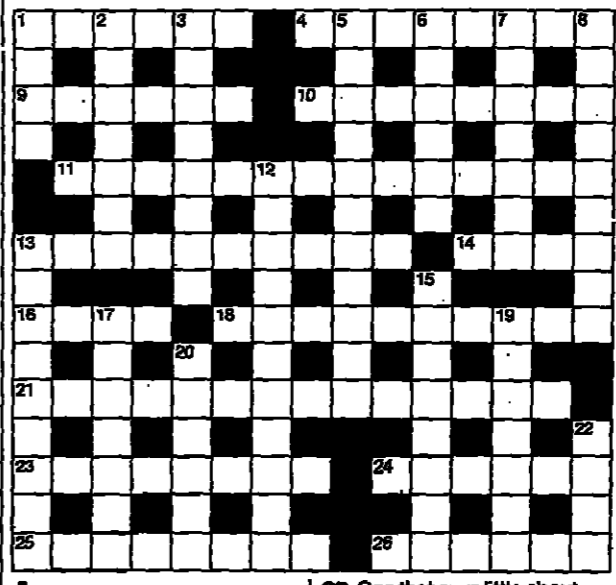
Worse befell the No. 2 seed and former British No. 1 Rachel Viollot, the daughter of Manchester United's Fifities star Dennis Viollet, who lives and trains in the United States, went out 6-4, 1-6 against Surrey's Lorna Woodroffe.



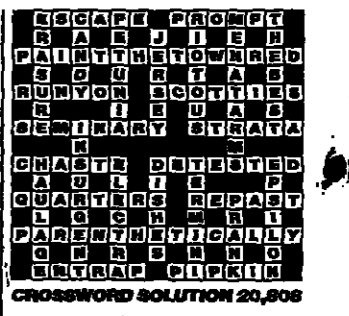
Henman... more training

Guardian Crossword No 20,809

Set by Janus



- Across
- 1 Two men to beware? (5)
 - 4 Goes with husbands or wives (5)
 - 9,8 Hardy oyster back on the menu? (6,2,3,5)
 - 10 Point time-server put on garden implement (5)
 - 11 Plead guilty, as Harrods doorman may do on sales day? (5,3,6)
 - 13 Unreasonable share in rail deployment (10)
 - 14 Make a new part for an actor? (4)
 - 16 Uniform for night before first night (4)
 - 18 Road with sinister associations for governments (10)
 - 21 Packed or unpacked, whichever is applicable (2,3,4,3,2)
 - 23 One that says little about very quiet artist? (8)
 - 24 Determined old soldier should be taken in (8)
 - 25 Study forepart of beard (5)
 - 26 Writer who liked to maintain high temperature? (6)
- Down
- 1 Kind of cakes or tarts (4)
 - 2 Does he turn to drama in the ring? (7)
 - 3 Answer to blockades if trials turn out (8)
 - 5 See 9 Across
 - 6 Trifling show of neglect (5)
 - 7 Compunction concerning detective (7)
 - 8 Striped cloth-workers (5)
 - 12 It could inflict a severe burning on a culprit's form (8,3)
 - 13 A client is somewhat inflexible (8)



CROSSWORD SOLUTION 20,809

As an upstanding member of Pakistani society, your husband is bound to be supportive (although you did say that if the baby was more than two days late you would have to be induced to fit in with his busy schedule).
An open letter to Jemima Goldsmith

G2 page 12

سكنا من الامل